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EDITORIAL

THE BISHOPS & THE PAWNS

In most of the capitalist West, and particularly in Reagan's America, the concept of economic democracy has been detached from the tradition of political freedom. Leaders of government and the major political parties have written off the demands of the lower orders for equity in deference to the demands of the higher ones for profits. To rationalize that brutal choice, politicians invoke economic theory; philosophers call on natural law; and theologians discern divine ordination. But now, at the moment of triumph for the lords of inequality, a powerful voice is rising to oppose the oppressive consensus.

The call comes from a committee of American Roman Catholic bishops who see class divisions deepening at home, and racial and regional inequalities widening throughout the world. They are frankly critical of a free-market system that destroys the "balance between individual initiatives and the common good," that sacrifices the social community to entrepreneurial greed.

The bishops' pleas derive from religious compassion and from the new social activism of liberation theology. Because of the former, their statement can be taken as an expression of concern without specific political consequences (which explains President Reagan's endorsement). Because of the latter, it will be bitterly attacked as Marxist heresy that threatens the long and rewarding relationship between the Roman Catholic and the corporate capitalist hierarchies.

What the bishops' document does not say, however, may be more important than what it does. It offers no strategy for change, beyond an appeal to compassion and concern. Economic equality will not be granted out of the goodness of any hierarch's heart. It will take struggle and conflict, and that is as likely to upset the rigid structure of the church as it is the masters of the marketplace.

REAGAN, THE PRESS, THE ELECTION
Herman Schwartz
Norman Birnbaum
Todd Gitlin

ABOLISHING THE G.L.C.
Mervyn Jones

FEDERAL POLLUTERS
Benjamin A. Goldman

EMMA GOLDMAN
Carol Sternhell

DE PALMA: 'HOMMAGE' IS WHERE THE ART IS
Andrew Kopkind

ELECTROCUTION BINGE

IN FLORIDA, INSANITY IS NO DEFENSE

ROBERT SHERRILL

The "insanity defense," allowed in every state but in no state given a really intelligible definition, is a wild joker in the deck.

—Charles L. Black Jr.
"Reflections on Opposing the Penalty of Death"

Tallahassee, Florida

When Congress and President Reagan cooperate in earnest, they are capable of making some remarkable leaps backward, as they proved a few weeks ago with the passage of that portion of their crime package known as the Insanity Defense Reform Act of 1984.

From now on it will be easier for Federal courts to send crazy people to jail. John Hinckley, who shot President Reagan and several others, is the reason for the new law. Although Hinckley's conduct since the attempted assassination shows he was and is crazy, many Federal politicians were sore as hell because the rule of law applicable to his trial made it simple for him to win acquittal and to find asylum in St. Elizabeth's. That rule was admittedly a topsy-turvy one: the prosecution had the bizarre burden of proving that Hinckley was sane. In most jurisdictions the defense would have had to prove that he was insane.

As usual, the politicians got carried away by self-righteousness. Instead of simply relocating the burden of proof, they removed the human part from the Federal government's definition of insanity. The new law, in effect, brings insanity standards in the Federal courts down to the level in most states, and will produce embarrassingly hardhearted results. Florida alone is producing

(*Continued on Page 552*)

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LETTERS.

WORLD BANK & BIRTH CONTROL

Washington

Betsy Hartmann and Jane Hughes's article on Bangladesh ["And the Poor Get Sterilized," June 30] refers to the role of the World Bank in relation to Bangladesh's population control program.

The World Bank, with other donors, is assisting the government of Bangladesh by financing a wide range of primary health care and family-planning services, including construction of health complexes and family welfare centers, in training and information and in education and motivational activities. As the authors of the article must be well aware, sterilization is only one, albeit an important one, of a variety of contraceptive methods adopted by the government to reduce its population growth rate. The government's program of incentives covers not only terminal methods, i.e. sterilization and vasectomies, but other forms of contraception as well. The World Bank is sensitive to the moral and cultural dimensions of all forms of birth control and accepts the need to draw a clear distinction between policies that encourage lower fertility on the one hand and use coercion on the other. Coercion is unacceptable, and incentive and disincentive programs require careful and continuous scrutiny to avoid unfairness and abuse.

The statements that the authors attributed to Dr. K. Kanagaratnam are totally inaccurate. In fact, his views fully reflect the position of the World Bank that donors have a responsibility (one which is conjoint with that of the government) for the proper implementation of aid to family-planning programs to try to insure that the quality of and conditions under which the services are provided are satisfactory, that adequate information and choice are available to the client and that the client is treated with proper respect for personal dignity.

Specifically, with regard to the government's sterilization program, the World Bank joined with the Swedish International Development Authority and the World Health Organization in establishing a surveillance team, and the government of Bangladesh recognized their responsibility by allowing such detailed oversight of the program's implementation. This was the direct result of findings reported in 1981 and 1982. It confirms that the donors recognize their responsibility to the programs they fund. The frank nature of the report produced by the surveillance team, of which Dr. Kanagaratnam was the rapporteur, reflects the desire of the donors and the government of Bangladesh to work together to upgrade the quality of services.

Frank Vogl
Information and Public Affairs
World Bank

HARTMANN AND HUGHES REPLY

Oxford, England

We are glad to find that, unlike the U.S. Agency for International Development, the World Bank explicitly recognizes that the payments made to those who accept sterilization in Bangladesh are in fact incentives. While it is true that incentives are also offered to women who accept IUDs, the amount is considerably less than that offered for sterilization: 35 taka as opposed to 175 taka and a sari worth 100 taka.

Unfortunately, in practice it is difficult to make a clear distinction between incentive programs and coercion, as the bank would like to do. An on-site investigation by a European voluntary agency recently revealed that in Faridpur and Pabna districts, ravaged by floods and food shortages, poor women have been forced to undergo sterilization in order to receive assistance under the government's Vulnerable Group Feeding scheme. This suggests that there are serious limitations to the donors' ability to undertake "careful and continuous scrutiny" of the sterilization program.

The quotation from Dr. Kanagaratnam absolving the donors of responsibility for abuses is from a personal interview and we stand by its accuracy.

Betsy Hartmann and Jane Hughes

MULRONEY IS NOT REAGAN

Port Burwell, Ont.

At least the title of your editorial on the recent Canadian election ["Canada's Reagan?" Sept. 15] ended with a question mark. I am not a Conservative—and did not vote for Brian Mulroney—but even to suggest he bears much resemblance to Reagan or Thatcher sounds like the usual American ignorance and arrogance about Canada.

First of all, you might be happy to know that in the past few weeks the Conservatives appointed two highly respected politicians who are strongly against the arms race to the Canadian delegation to the United Nations. They are Douglas Roche, a Conservative, and Stephen Lewis of the New Democratic Party (N.D.P.). The fact that a socialist leader has been picked for a key role might be smart politics, but it is certainly not setting-up a patsy. And in the recent talks with Secretary of State George Shultz, Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs Joe Clark expressed grave concern about acid rain. Somehow, the Conservatives have highlighted two very un-Reagan issues: arms reduction and the environment.

Second, the Conservatives did not come into office as a result of a Jerry Falwell, or a moral majority or pious mouthings. The rhetoric of the campaign was dull, and in taking their positions, John Turner and Mulroney seemed like Tweedledum and Tweedledee. Most Canadians felt that a change was probably healthy after so much Liberal hegemony. Whatever you heard that suggested "the degradation of the welfare state" certainly passed most Canadian voters by. A few years ago, Ed Broadbent, the N.D.P. leader, coined the phrase "corporate welfare bums" for executive and corporate tax write-offs at the expense of middle- and low-income earners. That struck such a chord with everyone that it is hard to imagine any government that attacks old-age pensions, health insurance et al. being popular in Canada. As usual, we may be dull and middle of the road, but sometimes there are real advantages: Armageddon is not on Mulroney's agenda.

Anne Lonergan

KEEP OUT OF CHILDREN'S REACH

Providence, R.I.

Richard Falk misses the point of the suicide pill referendum sponsored by students at Brown University in calling it a "morbid dramatization of resignation" ["The Big Issues," Nov. 3]. Our request for suicide pills from the infirmary for use after a nuclear war was an attempt to humanize the inconceivable—the suicidal nature of nuclear war.

We were pointing out that nuclear bombs are to Earth as suicide pills are to people. How many suicide pills do you need to kill yourself? There are enough nuclear bombs in the world. Nuclear war means suicide.

Our vote, which passed 1,044 to 687, was a call to action, not resignation. In the midst of so many nuclear bombs, we already live in Jonestown. But for how much longer?

Jason Salzman

FERGIT THAT BOOK LEARNING

Palestine, Tex.

I really got to hand it to you slicks.

Despite the presents of C. Trillin, I was cogitating about letting my sub lapse when T-Day come next March, but you all went out and got Molly Ivins to fill a couple of pages for you ["H. Ross Went Seven Bubbles Off Plumb (And Other Tales)," Oct. 13].

Hell, as her h.s. (that's for high school) English, thinking and writing teacher, I am sure going to extend that sub come 3/85, just in case you got a couple of more pages to fill along the line. That's so's I can watch her make a mess outa ever thing I stood and sat for during those tender years (hers).

Bob Moore

FORGET THE ALAMO

Larkspur, Calif.

If I were a wise guy looking for a star, I would bypass the entire Lone Star State and find Molly Ivins, shining away in that Neanderthal paradise.

Robert Melchior

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EDITORIALS.

Blacklist 1984

On November 9, Vanessa Redgrave won a split decision in a suit she brought against the Boston Symphony Orchestra for canceling her performance as narrator of *Oedipus Rex*. On the one hand, a Federal jury awarded her $100,000 in damages for breach of contract; on the other, it rejected her claim that the orchestra had blacklisted her for political reasons, in violation of her civil rights.

Apparently, the jury bought the B.S.O.'s argument that it had canceled Redgrave not because of her political views but because the Jewish Defense League and anonymous individuals had threatened to disrupt the performance. Also, as one juror put it, the orchestra feared "losing financial support from the Jewish community."

But the jury's decision did not put the question of blacklisting to rest. Although no organized network of ideological vigilantes such as existed in the 1950s operates today, the principle underlying the orchestra's decision is the same as the one that prevailed then—punishing a performer for her political actions, associations and statements.

Even the rationalization that commercial rather than political considerations were the motive for the action is not new. In 1951, when actress Gale Sondergaard, best known

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for her portrayal of Spider Woman, was subpoenaed to appear before the House Committee on Un-American Activities and asked the Screen Actors Guild for help, the union's president, Ronald Reagan, replied:

> If any actor by his own actions outside of union activities has so offended American public opinion that he has made himself unsalable at the box office, the Guild cannot and would not want to force any employer to hire him.

The notion that single-interest groups may deny controversial performers their right to practice their craft, whether by goonish threats or by more subtle financial pressures, is repugnant to the First Amendment. Since the birth of the Republic, government officials have used the pretext of imminent civil disorder to deny unpopular figures permits to hold meetings or rallies. When a private organization adopts that rationale after telephone threats, as the B.S.O. did, there is even greater cause for alarm. If a security problem is anticipated, the police should be called and the performance should go on.

To be sure, Redgrave's views on the Palestinian question arouse strong political passions, especially among the organized Jewish community. But it is precisely in cases where emotions run deepest, where disagreements are strongest and where popular pressure is greatest that the words in the Bill of Rights become most imperative.

Nicaragua-Baiting

Not the least of the many U.S. failures that are helping to deepen the Nicaraguan quagmire is the cowardice of Congress in the face of executive aggression. It is easy enough for Democrats to vote against appropriations for the *contras* when that matter arises; a Congress that eagerly votes for the degradation of the domestic welfare system is on solid ground when it refuses handouts to the government's overseas clientele. But at the moment of crisis, when the Administration is testing political reaction in preparation for new assaults on Nicaragua, the opposition is silent or, worse, complaisant.

As the first false reports of the arrival of Soviet MIGs at Corinto were leaked to the press on Election Day, Democrats who have staked out key roles in Central America policy rushed to support Republican hawks. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan said the planes in Nicaraguan hands would be "unacceptable," which was a way of saying that the Air Force should feel free to bomb Corinto back to the Stone Age. Senator Christopher Dodd, who once sought to be a peacemaker in the region, wanted it known, as did Senator Jim Sasser, that he would not "rule out military action" to take out the phantom fighters. Even Senator-elect John Kerry, his victory over a right-wing Republican in Massachusetts won but not yet certified, barked his approval of force to neutralize the Soviet threat. Others, such as Representative Mike Barnes, remained ominously silent. As Ray Bonner, formerly *The New York Times*'s hard-hitting man in El Salvador, put it last week at the Fund for New Priorities, "There are no profiles in courage in Congress" now when they are so urgently needed.

The political failure is matched, for the most part, by the journalistic one. The networks, the newsmagazines, *The Times* and many other newspapers extend and elaborate on President Reagan's twisted truths and false claims. Unless you regularly read *The Evening Bulletin* of Providence, Rhode Island, you may not know, for instance, that U.S. Embassy officials in Managua bribed leading non-Sandinista opposition leaders to drop out of the recent election campaign. Every day the media carry stories about Nicaragua's economic troubles—the empty supermarkets, the shortages of medicine and spare parts, the thriving black market—but no detailed accounts of the murderous economic warfare directed against that small, impoverished nation by the richest empire in the history of civilization. We can read front-page articles about the latest defense of democracy by the Catholic hierarchs in Managua, but what does anyone in El Norte know of the desperate attempts by the Nicaraguan people to defend their country and the future of their revolution against the C.I.A. and the 82nd Airborne Division?

And yet the defense of Nicaragua is of crucial importance, not only to the Nicaraguans but to everyone in Latin America struggling for a measure of political and economic independence. The imperfections of Sandinista democracy and the problems of the Nicaraguan economy are worthy of discussion but are peripheral. The United States is determined to destroy any radical, independent, socialist society in the hemisphere if it is militarily and politically possible to do so. No excuse is too farfetched and no justification too lame to be marshaled in support of such policies. A year ago, U.N. ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick claimed that the Administration was waging "covert" war to force free elections in Nicaragua. Once the elections were scheduled, her employers tried to wreck the electoral process to justify a widening of the war. Thousands of *contras*, supported by a vast U.S. military command structure in Honduras, are devastating Nicaraguan villages, murdering and torturing their inhabitants and disrupting the national life. When the Nicaraguans seek arms from the only available source—the Soviet bloc—the Administration discovers a Red threat of aggression and prepares to move in for the kill.

In another sense, Nicaragua's defense effort is important to Americans who tried, and failed, to curtail President Reagan's power on November 6. Their fight is an extension of our politics, by other means. Reagan is a menace to peace in the hemisphere and in the world. If he can be stopped in Central America, he can be challenged everywhere.

In Dubious Victory

Peace and prosperity have again re-elected an incumbent President by a landslide. The post-election analyses attributed Ronald Reagan's win to his personal popularity, a rising tide of conservatism in the country, Mondale's mistakes and the like. But if history is any guide, some quite traditional factors

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underlie his overwhelming win. The economic upturn and the Administration's avoidance of a major foreign policy debacle made the President's re-election almost inevitable. Exit polls indicate that 92 percent of the voters who thought the economy was in good shape voted for Reagan; 87 percent of those who thought it was not voted for Mondale. Had Reagan faced the voters in 1982, when unemployment hit 10.1 percent and Republican candidates were shunning their President, that crinkly smile would have done little.

Also working for Reagan were the powers of incumbency. Only eight of the twenty-seven Presidents who have sought re-election have lost. In fact, Reagan fared less well than some other sitting chief executives in this century. His 58.9 percent share of the popular vote is lower than Richard Nixon's in 1972 (60.7 percent), Lyndon Johnson's in 1964 (61.1 percent), Franklin Roosevelt's in 1936 (60.8 percent) and is not much above Dwight Eisenhower's in 1956 (57.8 percent). In 1924, that other great communicator Calvin Coolidge won more than 54 percent, almost double the share of his Democratic opponent, John W. Davis.

The Republican Party did quite poorly. It lost two Senate seats and gained just thirteen in the House, an ideological shift of only ten, since some of the Democrats who lost had voted like Republicans. Other changes in personnel have set back the conservative cause. The Democrats added four strong liberals to their ranks in the Senate: Paul Simon, John Kerry, Albert Gore Jr. and Tom Harkin. They replace, respectively, the relatively ineffectual Charles Percy and Paul Tsongas; Howard Baker who, despite a moderate image, generally followed the conservative line; and the reactionary Roger Jepsen. Kentucky's switch from Democrat Walter Huddleston to Republican A. Mitchell McConnell is probably a wash. The nation was clearly not converted to the conservative gospel.

All this will compound the post-landslide miseries, which have afflicted almost every President. Those miseries may be exacerbated by Baker's departure; as majority leader, he labored constantly and effectively to hold the disparate Republican factions together.

More important, there are now more Senate votes against the MX missile, adventurism in Central America, school prayer, the balanced-budget amendment and antiabortion legislation than there were in the last Congress. On most of those issues, Reagan will not be in a strong position, since he is a lame duck and, as the polls show, most Americans oppose his views. The more liberal composition of the Senate will also make it difficult for him to win confirmation for reactionary Supreme Court nominees, and the Democrats have a good chance of winning control in 1986, when twenty-two Republican seats will be up for grabs.

The Democrats must make an effort to win back support for the national ticket in the South and West, where local liberals do well but party Presidential candidates do badly. And they must come up with humane ways of responding to the hard issues of social and economic justice. But like Mark Twain's death, the news of the demise of liberalism has been greatly exaggerated.

HERMAN SCHWARTZ

The People Speak

The election was difficult for those who are patriotic enough to think well of the country. The majority of the voters responded to the Reagan-Bush message—a strident fusion of vulgar chauvinism, covert racism, unashamed sexism and systematic selfishness. Their response, however, was ambivalent.

The new patriots celebrated the victory over Grenada, but they showed no enthusiasm for fighting tougher opponents. The Republicans did not dare propose conscription. We are in many respects a nation of blowhards. Many who call for strength are not ready to pay the personal price of empire.

The majority's racism is no less dishonest. An election analysis by Prof. Samuel Popkin in the November 11 *Washington Post* expresses it with elegant brutality, or brutal elegance. The blacks and the weak generally will have to succeed on their own, he wrote, just like the rest of us. That admonition ignores history. The economic and social ascent of American Catholics and Jews was made possible by political action and organized social pressure.

Sexism among the electorate was deliberately exploited by George Bush. In a fine mixture of snobbery and self-abasement, his wife seconded his condescension toward Geraldine Ferraro, and joined in his insults. Indeed, the Presidential theme of our standing tall surely had a double anatomical reference: the Republicans mobilized the almost limitless anxieties of American men about their potency.

As for selfishness, the electorate displayed no blindness to its long-term interests. By electing a Democratic House and reducing, slightly, the Republican majority in the Senate, the voters guaranteed that Reagan will not exact many sacrifices from them.

The President conveyed his winning message with a subtlety that was limited to rhetorical slips, knowing winks and jeering dissimulation. He appears not to have played the one role for which he is eminently fitted, the nation's buffoon. He served instead as its prompter.

The results of the 1984 election evoke serious and sad reflections on our national character and culture. Electoral participation rose hardly at all. We lack an authentic common life, a public sphere. Half America's citizens do not vote. Many who do can think in terms no more profound than the stereotypes fabricated by television. What can stop the pervasive depoliticization of the American people? I do not know. The most frequently heard suggestions—development of new ideas and new political organization—are both valid and beside the point. The resuscitation of our ideas of equality and the self-activation of an autonomous citizenry remain utopian ends. As long as the sanctity of the market is the one fundamental tenet of America's religious belief, its citizens will be unable to envisage other social institutions. No doubt, they think they freely choose the market, but, in fact, they do not reflect on the forces that dictate their choice. Until we can convince our country to think again, we will be fortunate to escape with Reaganism.

NORMAN BIRNBAUM

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BEAT THE DEVIL.

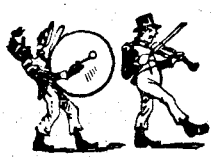
Long National Nightmare

The final, preposterous image of the election campaign coverage was furnished by *Newsweek*'s special "Election Extra" issue. It turns out that all through those long months a team of *Newsweek* political reporters had an agreement with their sources that they would be given access to certain material on condition it was not published until after the election. One reporter actually had two notebooks, one (presumably labeled B for bullshit) in which he would dutifully record the assertions of Administration officials that no secret plan to raise taxes was in the works, and the other (T for truth) in which he wrote down things to be concealed—Administration scenarios for raising taxes—until such time as their publication made no difference. *Time*'s Strobe Talbott had a similar deal during the Nitze and Rowney arms talks in Geneva last year.

The defense for this sort of arrangement is that without it, the reporter would simply learn nothing—which is pernicious nonsense. By partaking in these embargoes the reporter becomes even more complicit in news management than is regularly the case. The losers are the readers who trustingly fork out their money each week for *Time* and *Newsweek* in the hopes of finding out what's going on, little realizing that bargains have been made to keep them in the dark as long as it counts.

The Phantom Planes

George Shultz should become the second member of Reagan's Cabinet to be on the receiving end of a criminal indictment. On November 10, discussing the leaked election night reports of the possible arrival of MIG-21 fighter planes in Nicaragua, he remarked, "Whoever leaked that material engaged in a criminal act in my opinion." But back at the start of October, in exchanges with people not in government, Shultz was alluding to the fact that a Soviet freighter bound for Nicaragua might be carrying MIG-21s.



In late September, U.S. satellite photographs of the Bakuriani receiving cargo at its Black Sea port showed that on an adjacent quay sat crates of a type that had been known in the past to contain MIG-21s. After an interval of cloud cover, photographs showed that the Bakuriani had departed and the crates were gone. Intelligence analysts inferred that the latter might have been loaded onto the former, and the news was circulated throughout the Administration.

As the Bakuriani plowed its way across the Atlantic, round Cape Horn and up toward Corinto, advocates of escalation against Nicaragua began to see the uses to which ship and cargo could be put.

The ultras—to be distinguished marginally from the ordinary warmongering rabble—include Gen. Paul Gorman, head of the U.S. Southern Command based in Panama, William Casey at the C.I.A., Fred Iklé and Nestor Sanchez at the Defense Department and Constantine Menges at the National Security Council. Gorman and the others tried zealously to promote the Bakuriani/MIG threat in the closing weeks of the campaign but couldn't get it off the ground, since Reagan's top advisers were not keen on a cliffhanging crisis disrupting the pre-election Presidential image of sweet reason. Right at the end of October, in an unusual session of the National Security Council, Reagan rejected the idea of emergency action. The October surprise was that there was no surprise. Had Reagan been slipping, it might have been a different story.

On election night the ultras moved, in a pre-emptive coup designed to seize the high ground during the crucial days of policy formation immediately after the victory. News of the imminent arrival of the Bakuriani was leaked to CBS from the Pentagon, and to NBC from the Reagan party in California. Given the origin of the NBC story, it's possible that the ultras inhabit the highest levels of the Administration.

For the next three days the media handled the story exactly as the ultras had hoped—on the front pages. The emphatic denials by the Soviet Union and Nicaragua that MIG-21s had been or would be dispatched to Nicaragua were duly recorded, along with the Administration's emphasis that no "conclusive proof" of the presence of the MIGs aboard the Bakuriani had been obtained. But by then the MIGs had become purely symbolic.

To the extent that the coverage revolved around the issue of what the Reagan Administration would do if the planes had arrived at Corinto, it was irrelevant whether they had arrived or not. The papers remembered to mention that it was unlikely the MIGs were aboard and then went back to their worst-case analysis. This is often true in war scares. The Russians never deployed nuclear matériel in Cuba during the missile crisis of 1962, contrary to popular memory. Leading up to the crisis all that U.S. spy planes ever observed were metal canisters that might or might not have contained missiles (not warheads), just as the Bakuriani might or might not have been carrying MIG-21s.

A *New York Times* editorial for Friday, November 9, realized the fondest dreams of the ultras: "If American surveillance has blundered, Nicaragua has an easy way to prove it. Expose the cargo and expose the accusers. The larger point—even if galling—that Nicaragua's arms are a hemisphere [*sic*] concern has already been granted."

Both Philip Taubman of *The Times* and Fred Hiatt of *The Washington Post* managed to establish pretty clearly by the weekend what was going on. Taubman cited "certain national security aides" who "wanted to use the issue of the planes to increase overall American pressure on Nicaragua." That was on Saturday. On Sunday, November 11, Taubman reported that the Reagan Administration was studying tougher measures against Nicaragua, including the withdrawal of its ambassador and even a full naval "quarantine" (the new word for embargo). In that story and in another the following day, Taubman made it clear that both the Bakuriani shipment and the "tougher measures" stories were leaked as move and countermove by government factions locked in a policy fight.

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ALEXANDER COCKBURN

The net result of the whole affair is that the Administration has got the media to concede that the United States is entirely within its rights to decide what can and cannot be shipped to Nicaragua and what weapons that country may or may not buy to defend itself against attacks sponsored by the United States. The principle of intervention has been conceded. It's now only a matter of cosmetics and timing.

Hello, History? Get Me Rewrite

The way the newspapers are these days, it's getting harder and harder to remember what the supposed advantages of a free press are. I opened up my *Washington Post* on Monday, November 12, and found this in an editorial about Chile:

> A myth of American responsibility for the collapse of Chilean democracy spread in the 1970s. We say myth because the ever-expanding record makes it clear that Chileans were the architects of their own disaster, and the American role was, though often unwise and unhelpful, finally peripheral.

Unwise and *unhelpful*, eh? The United States contrived to starve Allende's Chile of multilateral and bilateral economic aid. It sent teams that successfully organized the assassination of Gen. René Schneider and that plotted the murder of the President himself. It financed the opposition newspaper *El Mercurio*, fostered labor disruptions and enthusiastically promoted the tyranny that survives to this day.

Farber's Follies

Anyone relying on M.A. Farber's coverage of the Westmoreland trial in *The New York Times* might well be forming the notion that the general's forces are carrying the day. Farber has apparently decided to simplify his life by omitting to report that Westmoreland's witnesses are being submitted to the inconvenience of cross-examination. Such cross-examinations, conducted by David Boies, have often left these witnesses in sorry shape, confessing to contradictions in testimony, misspeakings and memory holes large enough to jump through.

On October 19 anyone without access to *The Times* would have thought CBS had a good session in court the previous day. Boies had introduced cables from Gen. Earle Wheeler, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to Westmoreland, urging him to hide increased North Vietnamese troop strength during 1967. The headline in *USA Today* was "Army cables score points for CBS"; in *The Washington Post*, "Westmoreland Told Not to Inform Media"; in *Newsday*, "Brass Warned Westmoreland"; in the New York *Daily News*, "Westy ordered to withhold data: cables"; in the *New York Post*, "Westy Was Told: Keep Mum on Cong." By contrast, Farber's story in *The Times* was headed "A Statement Used by CBS Is Questioned at Libel Trial," because Farber chose to lead with a courtroom discussion of whether Westmoreland or Wheeler had said, "What am I going to tell the President?" Only in his thirteenth paragraph did Farber manage a tangential reference to the story every other reporter in court correctly took as the most telling event of the day.

Press coverage on October 25 provides another instructive guide to Farber's curious relationship to the events unfolding in the courtroom. The previous day Lieut. Gen. Phillip Davidson, Westmoreland's intelligence chief, had endured a difficult cross-examination by Boies in which he had contradicted himself numerous times and made a crucial admission that there was a "command position"—i.e. ceiling—on the number of North Vietnamese troops that the high brass would accept. The *Philadelphia Inquirer* headed its story "Westmoreland aide struggles with testimony"; the *Chicago Tribune*, "About-face at CBS trial"; the *Daily News*, "Westy's witness trips over troops"; the *New York Post*, "Westy Aide: Hide Real Enemy Strength." The wire services reflected the same assessment of the news. The *Times* story was headed "U.S. Intelligence Chief Says He Wasn't Asked to Falsify Reports in Vietnam," thus reflecting Farber's lead, which was about Davidson's unsurprising assertion to Westmoreland's lawyer, Dan Burt, that Westmoreland had never asked him to fake intelligence. Only at the end of his story did Farber allude to the cross-examination that, once again, every other journalist in the room reported to be devastating.

No one reading Farber would know that Westmoreland's prime witnesses—Walt Rostow, Robert Komer, Col. George Godding, General Davidson and even, to a certain extent, Lieut. Gen. Daniel Graham—have all had serious problems in cross-examination. The morning I was at the trial, reporters joked about which trial Farber was covering. It's no laughing matter though. Farber's ludicrous accounts in *The Times* help form the popular impression across the country that the honorable military is at last prevailing in court, just as decent Vietnam War veterans are at last winning the respect of their countrymen. I keep looking for a black face in those photographs of veterans who gathered around the memorial in Washington on November 12. No luck so far. I suppose no blacks fought in Vietnam.

As the World Turns

§ "Could the officer have aimed to warn or wound rather than to kill? Could the team have used Chemical Mace or tear gas?" This was in a November 2 *New York Times* editorial, apropos the N.Y.P.D.'s shooting of Eleanor Bumpurs, the 66-year-old Bronx woman who was behind in her rent. I love liberals when they try to think constructively.

§ "Sandinistas set for reconstruction on wave of popular support." Headline in *Pravda*? No, headline in the communist-controlled London *Financial Times*. Most newspapers outside the United States thought it of interest that Nicaragua had had its first "clean" elections (as the *Financial Times* reporter put it) in living memory.

§ Reza Pahlavi, 23-year-old son of the late Shah of Iran, has told a Brazilian newsmagazine that he offered to serve in Iran's army to fight Iraq but that the army did not even answer. If he cannot regain the throne, he said, he would like to become a movie director.

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UNCIVIL LIBERTIES.

CALVIN TRILLIN

I know the folks at the F.B.I. were upset about Special Agent Richard Miller, the first G-man ever indicted for spying, but I really don't think it was necessary to arrest him. They could have simply taken his "Special" away from him. Then he would have been the only person in the entire Federal Bureau of Investigation who was just a plain, everyday, run-of-the-mill agent. Think of the humiliation! Let's say that five F.B.I. men show up at the home of a schoolteacher who is suspected of having pumped $840 into the Cuban economy by going on an Educators Against Fascism tour of the island—thus enabling Castro to stave off economic collapse and continue exporting revolution to our neighbors in this hemisphere. "I'm Special Agent Murphy," the senior man on the job says. "And this is Special Agent McDonald, Special Agent Burnside, Special Agent Fox and Agent Miller."

"Agent Miller?" the schoolteacher says, looking at Miller with a mixture of curiosity and pity. "You're just an agent? Nothing special?"

For Miller, that would be worse than imprisonment. Americans love titles. Any Ford dealer who ever managed to buy himself a short-term ambassadorship to some banana republic is likely to insist on being called Mr. Ambassador for the rest of his life by every salesman on the lot. Knowing that people savor their titles, I try to use them whenever possible. I used to call any lawyer I knew "counselor" until I realized that the word nudges some of them into business mode—a discovery I made after I asked a lawyer friend at a party how he liked his new Toyota ("Are you finding there's enough room in that luggage section, counselor?") and two weeks later received a bill for $350.

I have never really had a proper title myself. Some years ago I announced a preference for being addressed as Governor Trillin, because I once played Thomas E. Dewey in a summer-camp sketch ("The Mustache That Walks Like a Man"), and I experimented for a while in 1977 with Chairman Trillin, a title derived from my chairmanship of a committee that ran the raffle one year at P.S. 3. My Army rank—I was Sp/4 Trillin at the height of my military career—has not proved adequate to my needs. The normal Army short form, Spec 4, can be improved a bit by pronouncing the abbreviation S-P-Stroke-Four, but the full title, Specialist 4th Class, sounds like the man in charge of holding the wrenches.

My great opportunity for an impressive title came when I wrote campaign speeches for the last successful Democratic peace candidate, Lyndon B. Johnson. That was in 1964, when Johnson was saying that he would never send American boys to fight a land war in Asia, and Barry Goldwater kept open the possibility of not simply sending troops to South Vietnam but also bombing the North. (Such intemperance led to the widespread belief that Goldwater was "outside the mainstream of American politics," a characterization that provokes a weak chuckle now that the right bank of the mainstream has overflowed to form the Rio Wacko.) I assumed that Johnson would win and that I would therefore deserve, if that's the word, a job in the Administration—not to speak of the gratitude of my countrymen for having helped avoid a senseless, hopeless war that could have left tens of thousands dead and our nation bitterly divided. I thought this even though Johnson never used any of my speeches, preferring to discard the prepared text for his own style of stump speaking ("Your President loves you—every last little bitty one of you").

As the campaign ended, I made it clear that there was only one reward I would accept—a seat on the Supreme Court. My choice of offices surprised one of my fellow speech writers, who was hoping that his loyal service would win him a job as an assistant public information officer in the Bureau of Mines.

"Never set your sights too low," I said, using a phrase I had worked into a carefully crafted speech that the President had abandoned in favor of saying, "What has Barry Goldwater ever done for Culpepper, Virginia?"

"What makes you think they'll appoint you to the Supreme Court?" my colleague asked.

"For one, I'm available," I said. "Also, I won't overstay my welcome. I only want to be there long enough to appear in the group picture and pick up the title." I thought, in fact, that I might be able to get away with just renting the robe.

Lyndon Johnson did win, of course, but my appointment to the Court was among those campaign expectations that were not realized. I thought I might have another chance this time around if Mondale and Ferraro won. Geraldine Ferraro owed me one. I had the information that could have destroyed her candidacy. I knew that she had attended one of Roy Cohn's annual birthday parties—a gathering of glitz-hounds, pol-shmearers, discoflies, stretch-jockeys, model-daters, real estate finaglers and Big K'nockers that I have always called the Foxhole Party, since it includes most of the prominent people in New York City you wouldn't want in the next foxhole. I still have the clipping from the *SoHo News*, which used to station a couple of reporters outside to note down the names of the guests, in the way that the F.B.I. stations special agents (or Agent Miller if it's raining) outside mob funerals.

Is this guilt by association? You bet! Did I use it? No, indeed. I wish I could say that I didn't use it because I'm above the sort of scummy journalism *The Wall Street Journal* and *New York Post* displayed in dispatching their bloodhounds to come up with exposés like the one revealing Ferraro's great-uncle to have been an excessive user of garlic. That's not why I didn't use it; I wanted her to owe me one. Then I'd be appointed to the Supreme Court. I had even decided to buy a robe. I would hang it on my coatrack after my retirement, so I could point it out to guests. They would say, "It's quite a handsome robe, Mr. Justice Trillin."

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ARTICLES.

THE PRESS AND THE ELECTION

How the Center Shifted Right

TODD GITLIN

Although the press has been accused of insuring Ronald Reagan's re-election, the numbers were simply too overwhelming to make it a convincing scapegoat. A solid majority of the voters *wanted* Reagan, not because they share all his beliefs but because they were hungry to believe that happy days are here again. They like his ingratiating, avuncular style; they like his tough talk and the fact that he doesn't seem to mean it. Many of them feel "better off" than they did four years ago, even if they can't prove that they are. They want to be in the mood Reagan says they're in.

It may be that all the truth-telling in the world could not have prevented the landslide—especially when the alternative was a lackluster spokesman for an unexciting politics. Still, the press bears a serious share of the responsibility for helping create the climate in which a landslide could occur. To shift metaphors: the press likes to think of itself as a watchdog, protecting all good and true values; but it is not, any more than it is a lap dog. It is another kind of animal entirely, the kind of pet that snarls at strangers, then nips endearingly at his master in order to show how feisty he is. He knows, though, not to nip too hard. He feels at home in the master's house, and lost outside it.

With everything working against him, from his wooden personality and whiny voice to his unfashionable weak liberalism, Walter Mondale's only chance was to challenge Reagan on his own ground. Having blundered by promising a tax increase, he couldn't win on the economic issues; the timing of the recovery couldn't have been better for Reagan. Moreover, Mondale had Jimmy Carter's cross to bear. Since the real sufferers weren't going to vote in sufficient numbers to make a difference and since the covert and proxy wars in Central America hadn't dented the widespread feeling that the country was at peace, Reagan emanated the twin auras of prosperity and peace. The only way Mondale could counter those advantages was by penetrating the Reagan image and revealing him as the old, incompetent, misinformed fellow he is.

In the first debate, Reagan gave him his chance. The President got tangled in an excess of facts, forgot his script and seemed out of control. For sheer evasion, his performance was no worse than the ones he gives at press conferences, but who remembered those?

This time, though, the exchange was in prime time and the stakes were high, so reporters decided it was finally safe to say what many of them knew all along: the emperor was, shall we say, lacking a few garments. Especially after Reagan himself confessed he'd flopped, the network analysts anointed Mondale as the winner of the debate.

And so, if there was a single occasion when Mondale stood a chance—if not of winning the election, at least of averting the worst—it was the second debate. Reagan's backstage handlers had abandoned the strategy of displaying their candidate's mastery of the facts; they had decided to let Reagan be Reagan. But in the early minutes of the debate the President seemed ruffled. When Mondale launched his well-rehearsed sallies, Reagan looked pained and seemed defensive. He tried to downplay Mondale's criticism of the Central Intelligence Agency's manual on terrorism by claiming, falsely, that only twelve copies of it had been distributed to the *contras*. He blithely accused the Carter Administration of "unilateral disarmament" (which would be news to Harold Brown, Secretary of Defense at the time). After more of the same, he botched his peroration, trailing off with a confused anecdote about a drive along the California coast and a time capsule, which the embarrassed moderator, Edwin Newman, cut short because time had run out.

No sooner was the debate finished than the instant analysts went to work reclothing their denuded monarch. In a virtual chorus, the network pundits intoned that the President had given a good account of himself; that he had come back from the limbo to which they themselves, two weeks before, had consigned him; that he had held his own, regained momentum, beaten back Mondale's last-minute challenge. Twirling the dial in pursuit of sense, I heard nothing from the network sages about Reagan's nonsensical defense of Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos or his tributes to Somoza and the Shah; not a probing question about the Star Wars plan or his claim that the United States does not have an adequate nuclear deterrent; nothing about his admission that he *did* adhere to a "philosophical" belief in Armageddon; not even a word about his pinched, defensive look. The next day's *New York Times* brought Howell Raines's objective report that Reagan's weaving, truncated tale about the time capsule had been "vivid." When all the reviews were in Reagan was acclaimed in a willing suspension of disbelief.

The panelists at the second debate were generally inquisitive, and they even startled Reagan with their bluntness. Here and there during the campaign, the press did insert an unpleasant hard fact into the general blur of Reagan's cross-country exercise in impression management. A few reporters even complained occasionally about the fact that the President held so few news conferences on the hustings that reporters could question him only over the roar of helicopter engines. But such remarks didn't faze Reagan,

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part of whose pixie appeal is that he shrugs off all accusations. The only thing that might have hurt him would have been constant reminders that he is armed, dangerous and deceptive—but the journalists of the major media (with the exception of *The Times*'s Anthony Lewis) were certainly not going to say that.

And why not? Not because they agree personally with Reagan's politics; surveys have shown reporters' political views are to the left of those of the majority of Americans. Not because they find his stumbles, his naps, his ignorance, endearing; they like him, but it runs deeper than that. They are afraid to fly in the face of Reagan's popularity. He is far more popular than they are. They treasure easy relations with the White House and share in the President's prestige and power. What's more, they have a will to believe him. His lies are described as "misstatements," mentioned in passing, then neglected. The fact that he knows not whereof he speaks only makes him more likable. Our oldest President is, in fact, our most little-boyish. Despite all the talk about his toughness, Reagan projects an air of wanting to be sheltered from reality, and the press—perhaps the electorate, too—wants to take care of him. His simple-mindedness embarrasses them; when he fumbles, they seem as eager as he is to change the subject.

The press has allowed itself to be drawn into the gravitational field of the Presidency because that is its natural position. Despite the fever to run hot stories about scandal and schism in high places, the Fourth Estate is a pillar of the social order as a whole. To see through Reagan's image would be to raise deeply disturbing questions about the political system and ideology that have permitted him to triumph. Media hostility to Richard Nixon and Jimmy Carter was an aberration. A decade ago, Watergate plunged them willy-nilly into an adversary relationship with which they soon grew uncomfortable. Today, the steady flow of optimistic reports on the economy is occasionally interrupted by bad news about poverty, racial polarization, housing shortages and the proliferation of ill-paying jobs—but not often enough to shake most people from feeling, If I'm not all right, Jack, I will be soon. Those who believe they are better off than in 1980 are considerably more numerous than those who actually *are* better off.

The news from abroad is similarly skewed. Reporting on Central America, the press lets Washington define the situation. When reporters cover Nicaragua, for example, they ask a perfectly valid question: To what extent are the elections free? But they do not ask with nearly the same vigor whether the elections in Guatemala or, for that matter, one-party Mexico are free. They tend to accept Administration claims that Nicaragua is behind the guerrilla insurgency in El Salvador but show no interest when the Guatemalan Army crosses the Mexican border to punish Indian refugees. When the Central Intelligence Agency leaks a tale about a shipment of hypothetical MIGs to Nicaragua, the pack jumps; although the story later collapses, the White House achieves the desired effect. When the President declares he is for arms control after twenty years of trashing it, pundits opine with poker faces that this consummate politician seems to mean it.

The press's short attention span is partly to blame for the President's free ride. But another factor is a shift of the media compass. The press seeks to stay in the mainstream; it veers when the center does, and now the center has veered to the right. The signs are unmistakable, especially on ABC News, which gave us the long-running "America Held Hostage" series. No ABC occasion is complete nowadays without the steely gaze of George Will, though he is sometimes balanced by *The Times*'s liberal columnist Tom Wicker. Another tip-off was the cast for the discussion last year of the television movie *The Day After*. Under pressure from *National Review*, Accuracy in Media and other right-wing outfits which accused the network of giving comfort to the Russians by running the film, ABC solicited the views of Secretary of State George Shultz (whom eagle-eyed interviewer Ted Koppel allowed to get away with the bland statement that nuclear war is "unacceptable"), William F. Buckley, Henry Kissinger and his protégé Brent Scowcroft of MX missile fame. The panel was stacked against the arms control advocates, who were represented only by Robert S. McNamara and Carl Sagan.

One reason the axis of media balance has shifted right is that conservatives—learning from liberals—have aggressively set up think tanks and foundations. Now the press seeks expert opinion on many topics from the American Enterprise Institute as frequently as it used to go to the Brookings Institution. On foreign policy, the Georgetown University circuit seems to be favored.

As the press veered right, it helped pull the entire spectrum of opinion with it. As a result, the center has been redefined to include what used to be the far right, giving Reagan's once-*outré* views greater credibility. During the four long years to come, one of the mental disciplines required for clear vision will be a refusal to let the apparatus of received opinion define the boundaries of legitimate thought. If the cowardly press, frightened by its own low popularity ratings in the polls, persists in normalizing gibberish, Ronald Reagan's personal mystique, which carried him to overwhelming victory, might well leave a lasting mark on American political opinion. □

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THE ATTACK ON THE G.L.C.

Can the Tories Abolish 'Red Ken'?

MERVYN JONES

When British voters went to the polls in the general election of June 1983, few took note of a phrase that had been inserted at the last moment in the Conservative Party's manifesto: "We shall abolish them [the Greater London Council (G.L.C.) and metropolitan counties] and return most of their functions to the boroughs and districts." Even fewer believed that the Tories would ever take such an extreme measure, or that they could succeed. But Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher is pursuing her purpose with the usual inflexible tenacity. Administratively, London is about to be abolished.

Under the abolition bill formally announced in the Queen's speech at the opening of the 1984-85 session of Parliament on November 6, the G.L.C.'s powers would be vested in London's thirty-two borough councils, which are democratically elected but, by virtue of their size, are politically far less significant bodies. Functions that cannot be divided, such as firefighting and the administration of the police force, will be taken over by boards headed by borough delegates. And to forestall the election of strong, radical city governments elsewhere in the country, the metropolitan county councils, which were created by Edward Heath's Conservative government in 1972 and which govern cities like Manchester and Liverpool and their satellite towns, will also be dismantled.

The bill is not the first attempt by a Tory government to alter the political bias of London's administration by changing its structure, but it is the most drastic. Since the Labor Party achieved major political status, in the 1920s, London, because of its predominantly working-class population, has tended to elect a Labor majority. From 1934, Labor's control of the G.L.C.'s predecessor, the London County Council (L.C.C.), was unshakable. In 1965, Prime Minister Alec Douglas-Home's Conservative government enlarged London to take in wealthier suburban areas; the L.C.C. became the Greater London Council, and borough boundaries were redrawn. The act stopped short, however, of breaking up the L.C.C.'s progressive Education Department. Renamed the Inner London Education Authority (I.L.E.A.), it continues to manage the city's schools and colleges.

Frustratingly for the Tories, the change didn't have the desired effect. Its designers had got their geography wrong; some of London's new territory consisted of industrial or dockland communities which consistently voted for Labor. Elections (held at four-year intervals) were generally a close call. The G.L.C. was controlled by Labor in 1973, by the Tories in 1977 and by Labor again in 1981.

In 1981, something quite intolerable happened so far as the Thatcherites were concerned. Not only did Labor win 50 of the 92 seats but most of the newly elected members were radicals, in contrast to the cautious moderates who had held sway in earlier Labor administrations. Their first act was to dismiss G.L.C. leader Andrew McIntosh who had also been the Labor leader in the election campaign, and replace him with Ken Livingstone. (McIntosh was tactfully elevated to the House of Lords.)

County Hall had never seen a leader like Livingstone before. He claims to have been politicized by the New Left while aiding American draft resisters during the Vietnam War. He lives in a single furnished room and travels to work by bus. When invited to the wedding of Prince Charles and Princess Diana, he declined with the remark, "My own wedding was bad enough." (Livingstone is divorced.)

The policies of the Livingstone administration have been equally iconoclastic. In 1981, fares on buses and underground trains were sharply reduced—an act of political courage in a period of steep inflation—and public transport was heavily subsidized by local property tax revenues. The same year, London was declared a nuclear-free zone, and banners rejecting the arms race appeared across the face of County Hall. Affirmative action was introduced to give more G.L.C.-controlled jobs to women and blacks, despite opposition from the unions representing the staff. Public money for the arts was allocated to street theater groups and mural artists rather than to established galleries and the opera. And all manner of local activists—on behalf of public-housing tenants, homeless squatters, ethnic minorities, gays and lesbians, battered women, feminist publishers—have received

DRAWINGS BY MONICA INCISA

Mervyn Jones is a freelance journalist living in London.

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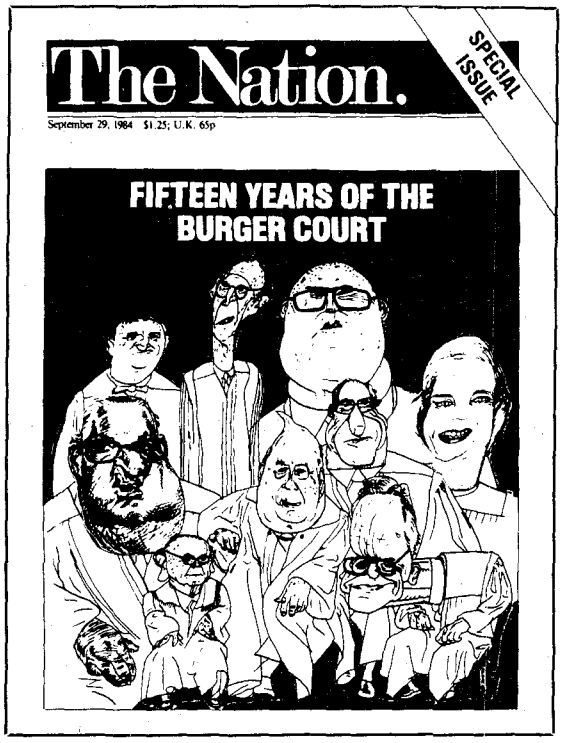

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recognition and financial aid from the G.L.C.

Most important, Livingstone's administration has attacked unemployment with a job-creation program. Most Britons tend to see unemployment as affecting the old industrial towns in northern England, Wales and Scotland. In reality, in some London districts unemployment is as high as it is anywhere in the nation. The East End has become a disaster area. Most of the London docks, which once provided some 20,000 jobs, were closed by 1983, their work transferred to deepwater ports farther along the Thames estuary. Scores of factories have relocated or gone out of business.

Combating unemployment has not hitherto been considered a duty of the city administration, except insofar as it is itself an employer. Livingstone has allocated funds to support a number of new enterprises, some owned by the G.L.C., some formed as cooperatives, some set up by private employers. Given the limited funds available and the adverse economic climate, there have been no miracles, but about 8,000 jobs have been created in needy areas. The policy runs counter to the Thatcher government's monetarist philosophy, which has so far produced only increased unemployment. What is most galling for the Tories, it provides an example in miniature of how a Labor job-creation program might work.

Livingstone has taken controversial stands on national as well as municipal issues. He openly advocates British withdrawal from Northern Ireland and has been received by leaders of Sinn Fein, the political wing of the Irish Republican Army. In the Labor Party, he aligns himself with Tony Benn and the so-called hard left. The news media were quick to christen him Red Ken and present him as a public enemy. But to the surprise of many, including some members of his own party, Livingstone and the new-model G.L.C. have become increasingly popular. The transport fare cut was welcomed, and had the result of reducing traffic congestion and accidents. When a court declared it illegal, a vigorous popular campaign formed in support of the Fares Fair program. Londoners like the open-door policy at County Hall, under which officials must make themselves accessible to the public, and the once-quiet corridors are swarming with citizens presenting their points of view. Londoners also like the proliferation of street fairs and park festivals celebrating events like Children's Day and Peace Day. In a gray age, London is once again something of a fun city with a sense of community. And with every television interview, Livingstone—articulate, quick-witted, calm under provocation—has improved his standing with his constituents. In effect, he is the first mayor that London has ever had, and he has become a household name much as Fiorello La Guardia was.

County Hall, draped with a banner displaying the number of London's unemployed, glowers at the Houses of Parliament from across the Thames. Thatcher came to the conclusion that there was only one way to clean up this eyesore: get rid of the G.L.C. and, with it, Red Ken. Hence the abolition bill, widely considered Thatcher's personal initiative. With

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their large majority in the House of Commons, the Conservatives are unlikely to be defeated in a crucial vote, and the bill will almost certainly go through. But it has already caused the government embarrassment.

For reasons of parliamentary scheduling, the abolition of the G.L.C. cannot be effected before 1986. Inconveniently, the next G.L.C. election should take place next May, and it is obvious to all observers that if it does, Labor will score a victory. Earlier this year, therefore, the Thatcher government introduced a short "paving bill" (to pave the way to abolition), under which the G.L.C. would cease to exist in 1985 and a government-appointed body would assume its functions until the boroughs took over in 1986. This outrage against democracy gave Livingstone a sure-fire issue. London was festooned with placards that showed a garbage bin crammed with votes and bore the slogan "Say No to No Say." The paving bill passed the House of Commons but was rejected in July by the House of Lords. Thatcher was forced to abandon the proposal, prolonging the life of the G.L.C. until at least 1986.

The government has also been forced to accept the continued existence of the I.L.E.A. Thatcher's plan to give control of education to the boroughs was clearly unworkable, since pupils often attend schools in other boroughs or transfer when their families move. The abolition bill has been amended so that the I.L.E.A. will remain, as an elected body with a predictable Labor majority.

With the general issue of abolition, too, Thatcher is on shaky ground. Much of her rhetoric over the years has featured attacks on big government and on the idea that "the man in Whitehall knows best" (an unfortunate phrase used many years ago by a Labor minister). Tories are supposed to favor local decision-making and local control of spending, but Thatcher's has turned out to be the most centralizing government Britain has seen for a long time. City and county councils have had their budgets scrutinized and pared, have received direct orders from Whitehall and have been penalized for disobedience. The abolition of the G.L.C. would come as final proof that this government cannot tolerate any rival centers of power.

What's more, Londoners have shown an unexpected attachment to their city government: polls indicate that 75 percent oppose abolition. All members of the G.L.C., Tory as well as Labor, oppose the plan. The bill will have to be piloted through the Commons by Environment Secretary Patrick Jenkin, the most bumbling and slow-witted of Thatcher's ministers, who is regularly made to look foolish in debates. It may well be heavily amended in committee and amended again when it reaches the Lords. Some Tories, especially those representing London districts, are likely to cast dissenting votes or at least to abstain. (The Lords could even throw the bill out, although it is generally held that the rejection of a major item of the government's program would exceed their constitutional power.)

Meanwhile, Red Ken can be relied on to muster all his ingenuity and his flair for publicity to demonstrate that he stands for democracy and Thatcher stands for arbitrary authority. He has already made a pre-emptive strike. In September, he and three other Labor G.L.C. members resigned their seats and stood for re-election. Furious,

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Thatcher denounced the move as a propaganda display and a waste of public money, and ordered that no Tory candidates run against them. Thus, the Labor candidates were left with no opposition except candidates of the Liberal and Social-Democratic Parties. The outcome was such a foregone conclusion that only 25 to 30 percent of eligible voters went to the polls. Livingstone and his three comrades secured upward of 70 percent of the votes cast, and went on to claim an endorsement of their resistance to abolition of the G.L.C.

The parliamentary debates over the G.L.C. will take place during a winter when Thatcher must also conduct the biggest battle of her political life—the battle to break the miners' strike. Another important event in coming months will be the trial under the Official Secrets Act of Clive Ponting, an assistant secretary at the Ministry of Defense who handed a Labor M.P. documents relating to the controversial sinking of the Argentine warship General Belgrano during the Falklands war. Ponting is expected to defend himself with the claim that he owes allegiance to Parliament and the British nation, not solely to the government. When the three issues are taken together—the use of the Official Secrets Act to discipline a public servant, the often violent police actions against striking miners and the abolition of the G.L.C. and other metropolitan county boards—Thatcher risks looking like something of a dictator. Meanwhile, unemployment remains tragically high and the economy is depressed. Whatever the fate of the G.L.C., the debate over its abolition may cost Thatcher more in popularity than she can afford. □

REAGAN'S SECRET WARS

by Jay Peterzell

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TAX-SUPPORTED TOXIC WASTE

Cleaning Up the Federal Polluters

BENJAMIN A. GOLDMAN

Because of loopholes in Federal laws, hazardous wastes produced by the military and by defense contractors have become a toxic time bomb, threatening our highways, homes and drinking water.

One explosion has already occurred. Last winter, 562 truckloads of hazardous wastes were shipped from the Army's arsenal in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, to a privately owned waste dump south of Lake Charles, Louisiana, 350 miles away. On February 28, a drum containing spent and rejected smoke bombs and canisters of a dye-and-smoke mix containing hexachloroethane, granular aluminum and potassium chlorate, exploded at the dump, igniting flammable liquids stored in a nearby pit. A toxic fire raged for forty-five minutes. Although the local volunteer fire department was called, its members refused to enter the site when company officials could not identify the chemicals that were burning.

An inspection conducted by the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality revealed that Pine Bluff Arsenal personnel had not properly completed the manifest listing the drums' contents. Nor had they removed the detonating devices of seven smoke bombs. Worst of all, they had packed the drums without material to absorb free liquids. Rick Hunter, the Army's inspector, theorized that due to the empty space within the drum and the lack of filler material, a spark was formed. Luckily, the spark ignited at the waste facility, where experienced workers in full protective clothing could contain the fire, rather than en route through Alexandria, one of Louisiana's largest cities.

Because of the Reagan Administration's military buildup, defense contractors are becoming major sources of hazardous wastes. Grumman Aerospace on Long Island generated more than 215,000 tons of hazardous wastes during 1982: that amounts to 85 percent of the hazardous wastes produced in Nassau County and almost one-quarter of all wastes produced in New York State that year. Most of those wastes, including 189 tons of flammable material, 101 tons of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), 3,176 tons of corrosive wastes and more than 210,000 tons of toxic chromium were probably shipped through New York City. Let's hope Grumman packs its drums better than the Army does.

Heavy metals like chromium are typical of wastes gener-

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ated by the defense industry. Like radioactive wastes, the poisoning they cause can result in mutations, cancer and birth defects. Unlike radioactive wastes, which decay over thousands of years, heavy metals remain toxic forever. Grumman sends most of its toxic chromium wastes to an out-of-state landfill. The rest are sent to a treatment facility. That course of action is preferable to burial, but recycling would be even better. That, however, is a more expensive process.

Mercury, another toxic heavy metal, was used during the 1950s in producing components for thermonuclear warheads. Over the years, illegal discharges and unreported spills of up to 2.4 million pounds of mercury occurred at the Y-12 plant in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, a facility now owned by the U.S. Department of Energy. Federal and state environmental officials did not learn of those events until May 1983, when the Department of Energy declassified the information after a staff scientist reported the contamination and complained that nothing was being done about it. The State of Tennessee contends that some of the discharges reached levels 3,000 times higher than the legal limit. Nearly 500,000 pounds of the toxic metal had been discharged directly into East Fork Poplar Creek. Union Carbide Corporation operated the facility when that contamination took place and continued to make the components until this year, when Martin Marietta took over the contract.

A Department of Energy report contends that fish contaminated by the mercury pose little threat to people in the area because Oak Ridge is a "relatively affluent city for East Tennessee, populated by scientists and engineers who have other life pursuits than habitual sports fishing." Yet barely two miles downstream from Y-12, the 1,500 black residents of Scarboro fish and swim in the creek.

Less than one year after the Department of Energy revealed information about the illegal discharges, the State of Tennessee and the Natural Resources Defense Council sued the Federal government to force Y-12 to comply with regulations concerning hazardous wastes. They won the suit.

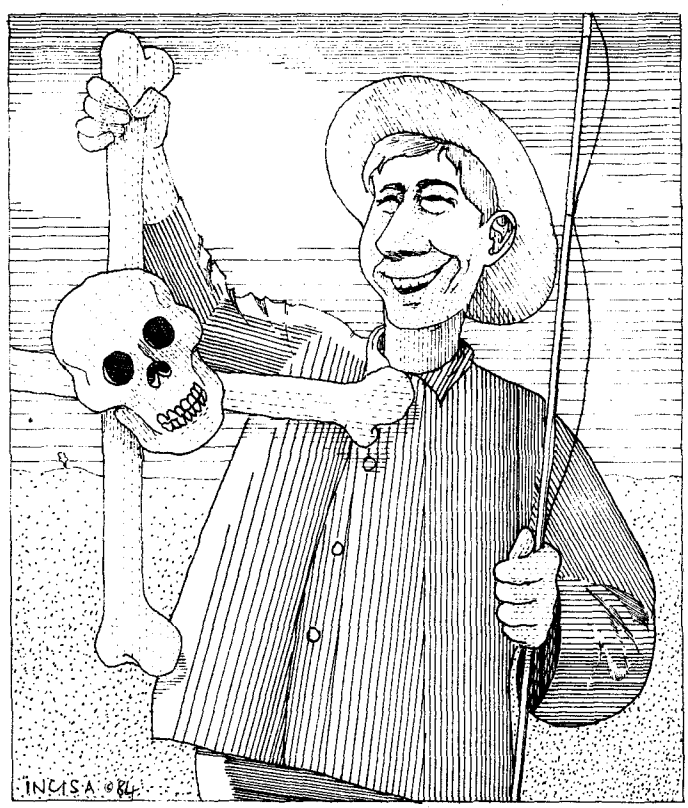
Other examples of Federal pollution abound. As many as 4,000 individual military dumps, including sites at one hundred overseas bases, contain toxic wastes that are environmentally threatening. In September the U.S. Navy submarine base in Groton, Connecticut, accidentally spilled thirty gallons of nearly pure PCBs, and an unknown concentration of PCBs in 400 gallons of water and oil, into the Thames River there and has not yet cleaned it up. An Air Force missile plant in Tucson, Arizona, routinely dumped thousands of tons of heavy metals, toxic solvents and paint residues into unlined pits, threatening Tucson's sole source of drinking water. In 1981 soil samples showed amounts of trichloroethylene, a degreasing agent, at a level 2,000 times higher than that considered safe by the Environmental Protection Agency. The Pentagon and the E.P.A. continue to haggle over what remedial action should be taken.

The enforcement of standards for managing hazardous wastes in the defense industry is compromised by considerations of national security. On that ground, E.P.A. inspectors can be barred from Federal weapons facilities, and information about management procedures and even potential contamination can be withheld from the public. Gene Lucero, an E.P.A. enforcement official, admits that the Pentagon determines cleanup standards, withholds information and works "according to its own internal time frame."

The E.P.A. has recently added more than thirty military facilities to its proposed list of toxic waste sites requiring priority cleanup. Previously, the list did not name Defense Department sites, although it did include three plants owned by military contractors: Teledyne's Wah Chang plant in Albany, Oregon; Martin Marietta's Sodyeco plant in Charlotte, North Carolina; and Monsanto Corporation's plant in Augusta, Georgia.

The millions of dollars for the cleanup of the government-owned sites will probably come from the Pentagon's budget rather than the E.P.A.'s Superfund, which was established in 1980 to pay for cleaning up abandoned dump sites. Either way the public pays, though if the Pentagon does the job, the money will come directly out of income taxes, whereas the Superfund is financed largely by a special tax on corporations. The Defense Department decided long ago that it would assume financial liability for mistakes by corporate operators of government-owned plants and machinery.

Last year the Pentagon estimated 450 installations could be cleaned up by 1993 for $500 million. Now it concedes that action will not even begin at the sites until 2003 and that the bill will come to billions of dollars. New estimates for decontaminating just one site, the Army's Rocky Mountain Arsenal near Denver, where nerve gas, pesticides and munitions were produced during World War II, total $357 million, though that amount could increase 40 percent by the time the project is completed.



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Stepped-up military production has increased the costs and risks associated with waste management at Federal and private facilities. In the end, we will have to pay the price for it, either in dollars or in sickness and death. Ultimately, the problem is not technical or economic but political and moral. □

Insanity

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

enough embarrassment for the whole nation. The state is on an electrocution binge that, among other things, makes a mockery of one of the oldest principles of British and American justice: people who are mentally incapacitated should not be executed.

One of the men executed most recently in Florida, James Dupree Henry, had to be dragged to the electric chair by prison guards. Not every condemned prisoner resists: Antony Antone, who was cooked by the state eight months earlier, marched jauntily up to the chair. His eagerness can perhaps be explained by the fact that he was loony (syphilis had spread to his brain, it was said) and was convinced that when the switch was thrown, his spirit would ooze out through his pineal gland, rise through seven layers of the universe and take up residence in the eighth, from which he would rule the world.

Frightened or jaunty, condemned men in Florida are going to the chair at an accelerated pace. The state's death house has become the River Rouge of capital punishment, its 2,000-volt assembly line conveying inmates to their end at twice the rate of any other state. It is a growth industry. Indeed, Florida has carried out more than one-third of all the executions in the nation since the U.S. Supreme Court reinstated capital punishment in 1976. Florida's death row, with a population of well over 200, houses one of every six condemned men in America.

The state's pre-eminence in the field of capital punishment is due largely to the zeal of Democratic Gov. Bob Graham, a glib, chubby-cheeked millionaire dairy farmer who is enough of a politician to know that Floridians overwhelmingly favor the death penalty. From the folks of Miami who feel besieged by Cuban thugs who arrived in the Mariel boatlift to the upstate rednecks who have always associated capital punishment with getting rid of mean niggers, a lot of Floridians do indeed love that chair.

Graham caters to their passion with exuberance. He has signed about ninety death warrants since he was elected, six years ago, and he is mad as hell that the appellate process has prevented his executing every man (there is one woman) on death row pronto. Some critics have accused him of playing politics with capital punishment, and they have good reason. Law and order has been the central plank of his two successful campaigns for governor, and he will undoubtedly point to his string of scalps when he runs for the Senate against Republican incumbent Paula Hawkins in 1986. (He will win, by the way, and thereby the Senate will gain a bouncier version of Scoop Jackson.)

But calling his support for the death penalty a political gesture doesn't do justice to Graham's sincerity. Apparently he does love to fry people. Required by law to hold clemency hearings for every condemned person, he rarely finds one worthy of mercy. He gets recommendations from a couple lawyers who must have practiced many hours to master the noncommital stares and grunts that used to be associated mainly with old-style Southern sheriffs. Ask those chaps how they arrived at a decision not to recommend clemency, and they will tell you only that they don't have to tell you. Governor Graham and his death clerks are mean mothers. But so are the trial judges and the State Supreme Court. The underlying attitude toward justice in Florida harks back to the South of the chain-gang era which Hollywood portrayed in the 1930s.

The best proof of this is the way Florida justice packs death row with murderers whom most objective people would agree are just plain crazy. At least two have been executed this year; other crazies will shortly be on the way to the chair. Don't get me wrong. Most of them are awful guys—nasty, vicious, perverse. Killing them will save the state $15,000 a year each. It's easy to say good riddance.

Except that they are . . . *crazy*. And that makes a difference. Even the supporters of capital punishment agree, at least for the record, that people who weren't all there when they committed murder should not be punished by death.

But the laws exempting the mentally deficient from capital punishment vary considerably from state to state. The most progressive courts, those in about one-fourth of the states, operate by the rule that a person should be acquitted if because of mental disease or mental defects he was either unable to appreciate the wrongfulness of his conduct or *unable to control himself*. He may *know* the difference between right and wrong but be considered insane if he is driven by compulsions, irresistible impulses.

That was the rule in most Federal jurisdictions until passage of the Insanity Defense Reform Act.

Now the Feds have adopted the primitive standard that obtains in the majority of states, including Florida—the "M'Naghten rule," which was first used in 1843 in Britain. M'Naghten's central test of insanity boils down to this narrow question: Did the defendant know the wrongfulness of his criminal act? There is a corollary: Is the defendant sane enough to help his lawyer in his defense?

Those loopholes are too small for many insane people to squeeze through, even if the states apply the tests fairly, which they often don't. Some of the people on Florida's death row knew what was right and what was wrong, but the difference didn't matter a particle to them. They were too kookaboo to trouble about such a trivial thing. Here are some examples:

Crazy No. 1: Arthur Frederick Goode 3d. Goode is no longer on death row because the state fried him this year. After the execution Governor Graham mouthed the usual

Robert Sherrill is the author of The Oil Follies of 1970-1980: How the Petroleum Industry Stole the Show (And Much More Besides), *from Doubleday.*

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pieties about how he hoped the execution would be a warning to others who harbored the desire to mistreat children. Even for a politician, that was an exceptionally dumb remark. Anybody who is as crazy and driven as Arthur Goode was will act exactly as he did, death penalty or no death penalty.

From the time Goode was 6 his parents and the teachers and juvenile officials who dealt with him knew he was uncommonly queer, possessed by quirky and dangerous sex impulses and, for all practical purposes, unable to tell right from wrong. His mother said that punishing him "was just like whipping a damned dog. He never could figure out why I was doing it." When he was 16, his parents put him in a school for slow learners. Everyone in the neighborhood of Hyattsville, Maryland, where he used to live knew he was a pervert. New families with children were warned about him. He was always getting caught fooling around with boys. But if he victimized society, both society and Goode were victimized by the Maryland bureaucracy, which knew he couldn't control himself but didn't act accordingly. As *The Washington Post* later reported, "Goode had received a variety of treatments in Maryland and walked through a virtual revolving door of mental hospitals for sex-related crimes." One day in 1976, when he was at the Spring Grove State Hospital in Catonsville, Maryland, he reportedly was feeling battier than usual and tried to see a doctor only to be told by the receptionist that he would have to make an appointment for later in the day. Instead of waiting, Goode took off for Florida, where he raped, tortured and murdered a 10-year-old boy. Then he returned to Maryland and raped and murdered an 11-year-old boy.

Florida decided Goode was competent to stand trial. Midway through the proceedings he got mad at his attorney, and the trial judge ruled he was rational enough to act as his own lawyer. Since Goode had already shown himself to have a compulsion to talk about his crimes, the judge's ruling assured his conviction. Goode took the stand and described what he had done in such intimate detail that many spectators wanted to throw up. Then came the sentencing portion of the trial, at which the jury had the choice of recommending death or twenty-five years to life in prison. He made it easy for them by declaring:

> I have no remorse whatsoever. I'm extremely proud of knowing that I, Arthur Frederick Goode, was the last person to see Jason alive or any of the other victims which I have murdered. Also, that I was the last person who heard the sweet, sexy voice. I was also the last person who had kissed his precious warm lips before I, Arthur Goode, had murdered him. These are some of the things I'm proud of. Jason was so cute and sexy-looking that I raped him while I beat him with my belt. I didn't want anybody else to see Jason's beautiful body again before I, Arthur Goode 3d, fucked him up. I'm ready right now to murder a little boy. . . . I would have the nerve to murder a little boy right here in this courtroom, in front of this jury just to prove that I would do such a thing, only if it was authorized by the Court, which I know it is not.

Was Goode putting on an act so that the jury would find him crazy? Not at all. No one ever accused him of pretending. For most of his life, Goode spoke repeatedly of the pleasure of sexually molesting small boys. And on death row, he was still talking about it, to the exclusion of all else. Well, not quite. He also told prison officials that he wanted to be a meteorologist. To him, the latter desire was as normal as the former.

The *St. Petersburg Times* accurately pointed out the chief defect in the state's case for electrocuting Goode:

> Of the 200 people who have died in Florida's electric chair, Arthur Frederick Goode III, who boasted of molesting and murdering little boys, was surely the most despised and the

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least mourned. . . . Goode's crimes were, in a word, fiendish, and so was his behavior in prison. He extolled pedophilia. He wrote letters taunting his victims' parents. He threatened to kill again, if ever he got the chance. He did everything possible to sign his own death warrant.

Yet the queasy fear lingers that Florida has imposed its supreme penalty on a lunatic who could not have helped what he was or what he did.

Crazy No. 2: Gary Eldon Alvord. Alvord, 39, was diagnosed as a paranoid schizophrenic early in life. He was first incarcerated at the age of 7. By the time he was 13 he was in a Michigan mental hospital, from which he escaped frequently. Once the state made the mistake of paroling him, and while out he kidnapped and raped a 10-year-old girl, using motor oil as a lubricant. This time he was sent to the state prison for the criminally insane. But again Michigan's security was lousy; Alvord escaped and headed for Tampa, Florida. Soon after he arrived, he knocked down the front door of a house where three women lived—grandmother, mother and daughter. He tied them up and raped the daughter and strangled her with a piece of parachute cord. Then he strangled the mother in the hallway, where she had dragged herself in an effort to escape. Tired and upset from his labors, he retired to the kitchen, where he drank some milk to soothe his ulcer. Feeling better, he went back and strangled the grandmother. Later he complained to his girlfriend that "they just wouldn't die" so he had to keep choking and choking them. He was pretty angry about that but, he told her, had there been "eighty people in that house" he would have gladly strangled them all to prevent them from reporting him.

Florida officials concede that Alvord had always had problems, but they didn't think he was too crazy to execute just because he spent most of his life in insane asylums.

Crazy No. 3: James Douglas Hill. Hill is 26 years old. His case is of particular interest because he has received nothing even remotely resembling justice. What is more, he is retarded.

Hill grew up in a brutally poor area of Tampa where crime, alcoholism and drug addiction are commonplace. But he avoided those traps and reportedly acquired an almost heroic reputation. He prevented a girl from being raped, rescued another girl from drowning and foiled a robbery, chasing the thief and holding him until the cops came. He was always doing favors for people. He worked to bring in money for his family but lost every job he held because he was subject to grand mal seizures.

He attended special classes for retarded children, but even there he stood out as hopelessly vulnerable. An impediment made his speech virtually unintelligible, and one teacher who could understand him acted as his interpreter. His schoolmates tricked and teased him so much that he dropped out in the eighth grade, having learned nothing. To this day Hill does not know his left hand from his right; he is not sure how many people are in his family ("Seven, I think") and can't recall where he was born ("Knoxville, Kentucky?").

On June 25, 1980, Tampa police discovered the body of a 12-year-old girl, Rosa Lee Parker, in a waste area known as "the pits." The body lay partially exposed in a shallow grave, covered with mud and hyacinths and clothed only in a brassiere, which had been pulled up above her breasts. She had died of asphyxiation. Rosa Lee Parker had been a friend of James Hill. He was charged with her murder.

The lawyer Hill's parents hired to defend him was not the best. He had never handled a capital case and didn't seem enthusiastic about the job. He visited his client in jail only twice. At the trial he did not introduce evidence of Hill's mental condition. He did not call the defendant's neighbors or teachers, who could have given an accurate portrait of him as a passive, dependent, childlike young man who may or may not have participated in the girl's murder but who would have done so only if, being notoriously suggestible, he had been invited along by the actual planners of the crime. Significantly, Hill refused a chance to plead guilty to second-degree murder. He hadn't done it, he said, and he wouldn't say he had.

He was convicted of first-degree murder, mainly on the testimony of two young men with long criminal records. One of them agreed to testify only after the cops promised to drop pending burglary and parole-violation charges against him and promised not to charge him with being an accessory after the fact in the murder of Parker. During the trial Hill tried to walk out of the courtroom because he heard members of the jury laughing and thought they were laughing at him. He was probably right.

At one point last year it looked as if Hill might have a chance to beat the rap on appeal. A new attorney, Robert Allan Foster Jr. of Tampa, made a dedicated effort. He enlisted a volunteer investigator, who pieced together Hill's background from numerous interviews with neighbors and school officials. A woman friend of one of the ex-convicts whose testimony put Hill away gave a sworn statement that he told her, "If I had to do it all over again, I would tell the truth." But best of all Foster got the unpaid assistance of a crackerjack clinical psychologist, Arthur Norman of Sarasota, whose experience has ranged from conducting research in psychophysiology for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to handling juvenile court cases. Much of his work has been in child psychology.

Norman administered the revised Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale to Hill and determined that he had a verbal I.Q. of 68, a performance I.Q. of 66 and a full-scale I.Q. of 66. "These scores," Norman pointed out in his report, "mean that about 99 percent of the American population of his age would have exceeded James's scores." The tests showed that while Hill's chronological age at the time of the murder was 22, his mental age was about 11.

Norman said that Hill was obviously incompetent to stand trial. "How can James make rational decisions when he can barely discern facts, let alone draw logical conclusions?" Evidence provided by prison medical officials showed "there is no doubt . . . that the defendant was unable to disclose pertinent facts to an attorney, communicate relevantly to an attorney, assist in planning a defense or to realistically challenge prosecution witnesses."

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Norman said he couldn't understand why Hill's attorney hadn't used psychiatric testimony from experts during the trial to prove Hill's incompetence. "The introduction of such expert witness opinion would have meant that James would not now be on death row."

He is undoubtedly correct on that point. Florida juries have been much more humane than the judges. Many of them have recommended mercy for the current inmates on death row but have been overruled by trial judges, who have the final say. If evidence of Hill's mental vacuity, along with his exceptionally clean reputation in the community, had been presented as mitigating factors, it seems likely that even the stoniest judge would have let him live.

Still, it wasn't too late. That's what clemency hearings are for. But Governor Graham was unimpressed by the new evidence, and Hill still sits on death row. However, his time there has not been entirely wasted. This 26-year-old boy has taught himself to read and write. He has, for example, written this message to his mother:

> Hi mom me hour are you doing to day fine i hope i am doing ok for now But i miss you so varry varry much that i can cry But i am to Big to cry. . . . i miss you i miss you love James all way. By now.

It could stand a little more polish, perhaps, but it isn't bad for a self-educated half-wit.

How do these wretched creatures wind up on death row when at the very least they should be in the modern equivalent of Bedlam, which is what most state mental hospitals resemble? The answer, as you probably guessed, is lack of money. John Hinckley did not go to a Federal asylum because of the lax insanity law, as critics claimed. He went to a Federal asylum instead of a Federal penitentiary because his father is a millionaire. Money can buy squads of psychiatrists willing to testify on behalf of assassins and murderers. They do not troop forward on behalf of impoverished assassins and murderers, however. Virtually everyone on every death row in this country is flat broke.

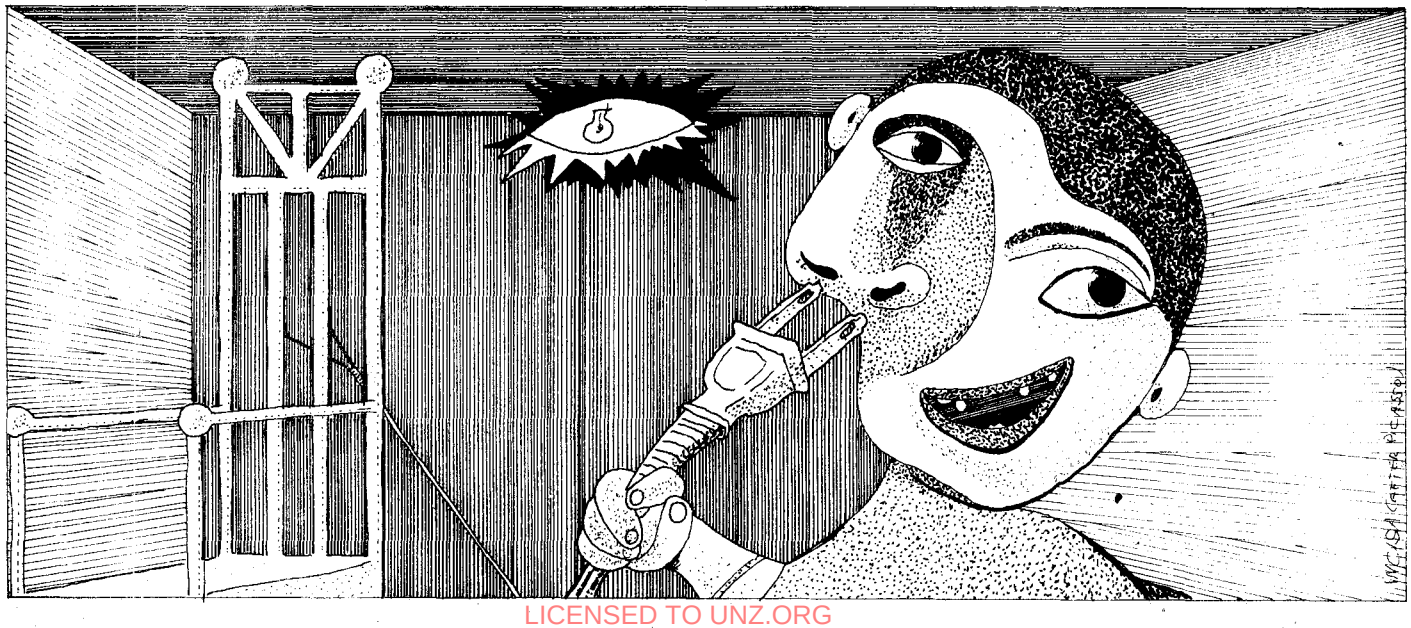
Scharlette Holdman, the scrappy director of the Florida Clearing House for Justice, recruits volunteer attorneys to bring appeals on behalf of condemned defendants. Despite the reluctance of most lawyers to work without pay, the Clearing House has been enormously successful. Even so, about 10 percent of the men on death row are without counsel. They are luckier than the mad inmates, who are almost never assisted by free psychiatrists. According to Holdman: "The only way to win an insanity plea is to have competent lawyers and unlimited resources. Competent lawyers often volunteer their help, but psychiatrists rarely do. Over the years, I have found hundreds of attorneys who have been willing to volunteer millions of dollars of their time to these defendants. I have found only three free shrinks—and two have been from out of state, one from Boston, one from Yale."

So far I've been talking about the people who were nuts when they committed their murders. But what about the guys who go nuts while living on death row?

To be fair, not everyone who is sent to death row reacts negatively to it. Take Ernest John Dobbert Jr. He was executed a couple months ago for killing two of his four children, abusing them until they died. There's no question about the abuse. But there was a big question as to whether he deserved to die. The jury voted 10 to 2—10 to 2!—to give him a life sentence, but the judge overruled them. Most of the evidence indicated that Dobbert, who was trying to be a single parent under rough conditions, had flipped. He had gone through so much hell on the outside that he didn't mind death row—as a place of residence, that is, not as a final address. He said that his ten years there had been "the happiest of my life." Just before they threw the switch on him, Dobbert winked at his lawyer.

But Dobbert was a rare fellow. Most long-term death row inmates crack. And since stays of six, seven, eight years are not at all uncommon, there's a lot of cracking going on. Holdman, who keeps close tabs on all of them in Florida, says:

> Probably half of the inmates go insane at one time or another. They go in and out. Like most people with mental



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illness, they have crisis periods, and other periods when they can function. A lot depends on stress, bad diet, lack of medication, lack of exercise. Before the deluge, we tried to go in and keep these people pasted together, give them hope, give them options. But now there are so many of them and they are on death row so long. Unless you can manipulate the environment, they can only deteriorate.

Some of these people are much too crazy to help their attorneys prepare appeals. They might have been able to assist their attorneys at trial time, three years, five years, earlier, but now they are totally psychotic, irrational. It doesn't take an expert to tell that. Any person would say they are insane. You would walk into their cell and say, "This person is mad as a hatter." Anybody would say it. We see them become catatonic, curl up in the fetal position and suck their thumbs, and the prison system gives them I.V.s and says they are faking insanity. Five to ten percent of the inmates go so far over the edge that we can never bring them back. We watch this happen to them. We saw it happen to Ford.

She was referring to 31-year-old Alvin Ford. Ford comes from a solid, middle-class family. He had a good work record and became an assistant manager for a restaurant. He did his job well, except for one thing: he had trouble with arithmetic. He would stay for hours after the restaurant had closed, sweating over the books, trying to make the cash register chits add up right, but he often failed, and as a result he was fired. After that, he had one bad break after another until he found himself, at the invitation of some friends, holding up a restaurant. A cop was killed, and Ford has been on death row since 1975.

For a time, he was all right. People who visited him said he seemed normal enough. His letters sounded normal. But over the last year or so he has become wackier and wackier. Today he acts and talks like an absolute fruitcake. Examples of Ford's insanity would fill several volumes. Here are a few: He sometimes thinks that Gail Rowland, Holdman's assistant at the Clearing House who has kept in close touch with him for several years, is either a dead disc jockey or one of his imaginary ten wives. When he believes the latter, he calls on spaceships to protect her. He believes his family is being held captive in a cell behind his and that a woman is also being held there, whom the guards rape from time to time. He rarely eats because he believes the guards are putting semen in his food. For the past year neither his lawyer nor visiting doctors have been able to carry on a conversation with him.

After interviewing Ford last November, Dr. Harold Kaufman, a Washington psychiatrist, judged him to be paranoid schizophrenic, suffering such severe delusions that he couldn't understand that he would soon be executed, or why. On a second visit in May, Kaufman found that Ford's condition had "seriously worsened, so that he now has at best only minimal contact with the events of the external world." By no civilized criterion, according to Kaufman, could he be considered "competent to be executed under the provisions of Florida's statute."

Summing up what it had learned of the case, the *St. Petersburg Times* said editorially, "Ford is either an exceptionally cunning actor or a hopelessly ill psychotic."

Florida law requires—as does the law in most states—that a condemned person have "the mental capacity to understand the nature and effect of the death penalty and the reasons why it is to be imposed upon him." Only four times in recent years have lawyers for condemned persons in Florida invoked this statute, and they have lost every time. The statute didn't save Goode, although Dr. George W. Barnard, a University of Florida psychiatrist called in by the defense two weeks before the execution, said that when Goode discussed his upcoming date with the electric chair, it was "like hearing a child talk about a pretend or make-believe situation . . . like listening to a child talk of a game called 'Death.'"

Nor will the statute save Alvin Ford, no matter how serious his mental illness may be. The reason is simple. So long as he knows that enough electricity can kill a person and knows that he has mortally offended the state, he qualifies for the electric chair. In fact, he needn't even acknowledge that he knows those things. The state may just decide he knows. The psychiatrists Governor Graham appointed last December to examine him talked at Ford for half an hour. Their questions disappeared into his mental void; when he responded at all, it was in gibberish. Half an hour was all it took them to decide—that was the length of Goode's psychiatric examination, too. Although they got no answer from Ford, the state psychiatrists apparently felt they could interpret his silences and mumbles, and they decided that sure enough he was psychotic as hell but not downright insane. As part of their investigation, they visited his cell and found it reasonably neat, and as one of the state's psychiatrists said, anyone with such a neat cell must have a neat mind and therefore Ford was just pretending.

As psychiatric examinations go, Ford's was a farce. Dr. Seymour L. Halleck, a well-known forensic psychiatrist at the University of North Carolina's School of Medicine, reviewed the Florida psychiatrists' evaluation process and concluded that it "fell below the generally accepted standard of care necessary to produce a reliable forensic psychiatric evaluation." Not nearly enough time was spent with Ford, Halleck said, and the interview was conducted in a courtroom full of lawyers, correctional officers and psychiatrists, a circus atmosphere in which "it would have been extremely difficult for Mr. Ford to fully reveal his problems or the nature of his illness."

Such criticisms as Halleck's bounce right off Florida's bureaucratic back.

What would the state stand to lose if it gave a bona fide insanity test to convicts before their execution? If Goode had been found too insane to be executed, he would have been put in a mental institution for treatment until he was sane; then he would have been executed. The same is true for Ford and all the other crazies on death row. It may sound odd to suggest that a child-killer like Goode or a cop-killer like Ford be saved until they can better understand the horror of being executed. But that happens to be one of the handy precepts of our legal system that allows us to maintain a veneer of decency. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Human, All Too Human

CAROL STERNHELL

EMMA GOLDMAN: An Intimate Life. *By Alice Wexler. Pantheon. 339 pp. $19.95.*

LOVE, ANARCHY, AND EMMA GOLDMAN. *By Candace Falk. Holt, Rinehart and Winston. 603 pp. $25.*

For a while, back in California, all my friends had cats named Emma. I do remember an occasional dog (like Candace Falk's "alternately wild and loving" Red Emma Goldman), hamster, affinity group (I once marched past the White House behind something called the Emma Goldman Brigade) and feminist auto-repair collective, but in general my Emmas were cats, domestic and mysterious. In those circles Emma Goldman was a household name, a symbolic presence, our Jewish grandmother. This forbidding feminist icon stared relentlessly from T-shirts, vowing to boycott any revolution that wouldn't let her dance.

Certainly, I knew Goldman as a face on a T-shirt long before I knew anything about her politics. For 1960s children who thought rock music would help end a war—"Strike because there's no poetry in your classes," read my favorite poster of the time—the dancing anarchist was a spiritual ally. We protested in her name without knowing much about her own fight against conscription and "all wars by capitalist governments." When feminists discovered that the personal was political, Goldman became a model, and one whose views seemed strikingly contemporary. While other activists were fighting for the vote, she was championing "free love," birth control and independence from those "internal tyrants, far more harmful to life and growth," that stifled women's emancipation. Goldman's thoughts on "Marriage and Love," published in 1910, ripened on our own tongues:

> Marriage is primarily an economic arrangement, an insurance pact. It differs from the ordinary life insurance agreement only in that it is more binding, more exacting. . . . If, however, woman's premium is a husband, she pays for it with her name, her privacy, her self-respect, her very life, 'until death doth part.' Moreover, the marriage insurance condemns her to lifelong dependency, to parasitism, to complete uselessness, individual as well as social.

As Alix Kates Shulman observed in 1970, "Some parts of Emma Goldman's program sound as though they were thought up last month. That this is so testifies as much to the difficulty in changing the system as to Emma Goldman's insight."

Indeed, today, forty-four years after her death in exile, we might welcome Goldman's clear, eloquent voice as our political leaders speak casually of Armageddon:

> Religion! How it dominates man's mind, how it humiliates and degrades his soul. . . . Break your mental fetters, says Anarchism to man, for not until you think and judge for yourself will you get rid of the dominion of darkness, the greatest obstacle to all progress.

As demagogues market home-grown pride, some of us remember Goldman's words of more than seventy years ago:

> Indeed, conceit, arrogance, and egotism are the essentials of patriotism. . . . Those who have had the fortune of being born on some particular spot, consider themselves better, nobler, grander, more intelligent than the living beings inhabiting any other spot. It is, therefore, the duty of everyone living on that chosen spot to fight, kill, and die in the attempt to impose his superiority upon all the others.

As our re-elected President eyes Nicaragua, Goldman's words are depressingly appropriate:

> We Americans claim to be a peace-loving people. We hate bloodshed; we are opposed to violence. Yet we go into spasms of joy over the possibility of projecting dynamite bombs from flying machines upon helpless citizens. . . . Yet our hearts swell with pride at the thought that America is becoming the most powerful nation on earth, and that it will eventually plant her iron foot on the necks of all other nations.

In fact, however, Emma Goldman—once known as "the most dangerous woman in America"—has been largely forgotten in 1984. None of my New York University students had even heard of her (although one thought she might have been prime minister of Israel). The "anarchist Queen" whose name was once enough "to produce a shudder"; the radical who, according to her 1961 biographer, Richard Drinnon, was viewed as "a mythical monster," a "female anti-Christ," "a vampire, ready to kill again, lick up the blood, and batten on the corpse," and "a national enemy"; the woman despised by J. Edgar Hoover and denounced by *The New York Times* as "among the most virulent and dangerous preachers and practicers of the doctrines of destruction"; the orator so feared by the United States that she was deported in 1919—that Emma Goldman has faded not even into history, but into feminist pop culture. Holly Near now sings a song about "dancing, Emma . . . at our revolution."

Neither Alice Wexler's *Emma Goldman: An Intimate Life* nor Candace Falk's *Love, Anarchy, and Emma Goldman* strike me as an ideal way of bringing Red Emma back to life. Taken together they're fascinating, like views of a specimen through two different microscopes neither of which shows its subject whole. Falk views all action through a narrow lens: Goldman's ten-year relationship with Ben Reitman, the doctor and former hobo who became her manager and awakened her to "the sublime madness of sex." Wexler, on the other hand, focuses so closely on details—lists of contributors to Goldman's magazine, *Mother Earth*; notes on attendance figures at her numerous lectures; philosophical differences between Bakuninists and Kropotkinites—that the broader canvas grows fuzzy. Wexler also cuts her story off with Goldman's deportation, a decision that will thoroughly frustrate readers not planning to read two biographies. Despite its subtitle, Wexler's book is rather academic. It's a useful volume for readers already familiar with Goldman's work and the political context of anarchism, and it offers thoughtful psychological and historical com-

Carol Sternhell, a writer and critic, teaches journalism at New York University.

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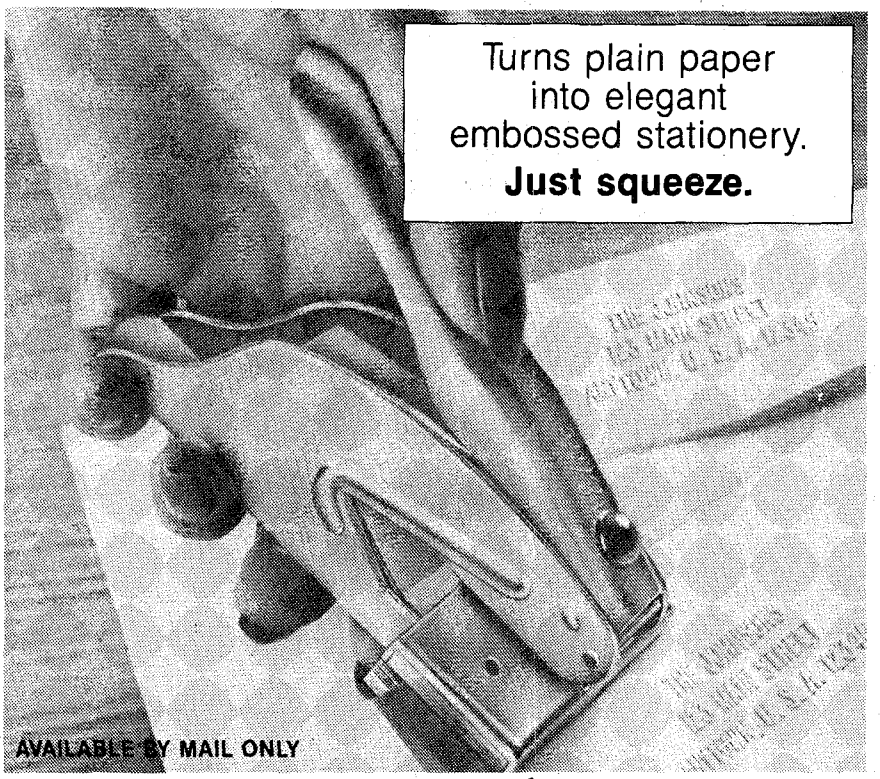

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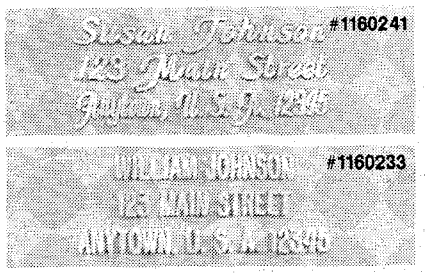

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mentary, but it annotates rather than illuminates.

Falk's biography, which seems to consist primarily of passionate, florid letters between Goldman and Reitman, is certainly intimate—and much livelier reading—but it turns that troubled relationship into the central fact of Goldman's story. Falk devotes only sixty of her 600 pages to Goldman's life before Ben—despite the fact that she was almost 39 when they met; had been an anarchist since she was 20; had helped her lover and lifelong comrade Alexander Berkman in his attempted assassination of industrialist Henry Clay Frick; had served a year in prison for telling unemployed workers, "If they do not give you work, demand bread. If they deny you both, take bread"; and had been accused of inspiring the assassination of President McKinley. Falk tells a different tale: "Oh, Ben, Ben, Ben!"

When Falk, with the help of her dog, Emma, discovered the Goldman/Reitman correspondence in a Chicago guitar shop nine years ago, she provided both biographers with a theme familiar to feminists: the tension between private and public, personal and political, love and work. While working on her massive, exuberant autobiography, *Living My Life*—still probably the best introduction to this melodramatic, self-important, oddly inspiring woman—Goldman wrote Berkman:

> I am writing about the life of Emma Goldman, the public person, not the private individual. I naturally want to let people see what one can do if imbued with an ideal, what one can endure and how one can overcome all difficulties and suffering in life. Will I be able to do that and yet give also the other side, the woman, the personality in quest for the unattainable in a personal sense? That's going to be the rub. But I mean to do it.

Her relationship with Reitman, a passion beyond "reason, intelligence, saneness, freedom, etc., etc.," often seemed overpowering to Goldman (at least on the evidence of what Wexler accurately calls her purple prose): "Hobo! Hobo! Hobo! What have you done to me? Why have you crept into my bones and blood? . . . Oh Ben, mean, cruel Ben. I am in agony. I do not want you to know how much I love you, how much I need you, how much I long for you. . . . You are mine, all mine. . . . Hobo I am raving. I am feverish. I am ill with anxiety. I don't

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think you love me." The letters to "Hobo" from "Mommy" were demanding, disappointed, ecstatic and erotic; her "treasure-box" longed for his "Willie," longed to "give him the t-b, she is simply starved and will swallow him alive when she gets hold of him."

It's easy to see Goldman the activist—the advocate of free love, "the greatest woman of her time"—and Goldman the love slave as contradictory figures. Falk speaks of "the disparity between her life and her ideals"; Wexler, who points out that Goldman's "public persona was perhaps her most original creation," adds, "To glimpse the 'all too human' (as Goldman described it) personality behind the heroic exterior is likely to be a disheartening experience." Goldman, who placed herself firmly within a heroic feminist tradition, wrote to Reitman:

> Mary Wollstonecraft, the most daring woman of her time, freest and boldest exponent of liberty, of free love, the slave of her passion for Imlay. How could anyone forgive such weakness? Thus I reasoned many years ago. Today? Emma Goldman, the Wollstonecraft of the 20th century, even like her great sister is weak and dependent, clinging to the man, no matter how worthless and faithless he is. What an irony of fate.

To many Goldman admirers the publication of the Reitman correspondence will be disturbing, an unwelcome portrait of the anarchist with no clothes.

Maybe I'm just getting old—I haven't been able to find my dancing Emma T-shirt for years—but I can't seem to take any of this very seriously. For one thing, the contradictions aren't particularly sharp; no one's "heroic exterior" stands up to much scrutiny (and if it did, I think I'd find *that* experience disheartening). Goldman's defense of free love ("in freedom it gives itself unreservedly, abundantly, completely") meant love freely chosen, not love free of pain. Her essays on women's emancipation are often more sympathetic to men than to other feminists:

> Indeed, if partial emancipation is to become a complete and true emancipation of woman, it will have to do away with the ridiculous notion that to be loved, to be sweetheart and mother, is synonymous with being slave or subordinate. It will have to do away with the absurd notion of the dualism of the sexes, or that man and woman represent two antagonistic worlds.

Her letters to newer loves (as she aged, the men in her life became younger) are not so different from the effusions to Ben: "Oh, Leon, Leon darling, do not fail me. . . . Let us drink the goblet to the last drop. Oh, Leon mine." And her life as a public figure seems remarkably consistent with her private passions. As Wexler points out, similar patterns recur in both realms: "Just as she dramatized her private life as if for public display, so too she brought to her politics an almost erotic intensity." When Goldman writes, "I have my one Great Love—my Ideal to sustain me, nothing else matters," she is talking about anarchism, but when she says, "All my life, I have resisted it, fought it, defied it. All my life striven for the ideal, *all my life*," she is merely complaining about Reitman's promiscuity.

The real contradiction is between Goldman, the woman who would save the world, and Emma, who finds it hard to sympathize with her sister's grief over the death of her son. "After all he is but one of many who were sacrificed," she writes a friend. "There are greater tragedies than even David's death." She can hardly bring herself to write her sister: "When one lives in the universe, it is most difficult to speak the language of one limited part." Here may be Goldman's real loss, her real sacrifice to the public and heroic: not passion, despite her morose "conclusion that a personal love is not for one who dedicates himself to an ideal," but compassion. Yet in a sense it doesn't matter; we need our heroes and our legends. And we need them in the universe, shouting planets into stars. □

What Objectivity?

MICHELE SOUDA

KATE QUINTON'S DAYS. *By Susan Sheehan. Houghton Mifflin. 158 pp. $15.95.*

In all but her first book, *Ten Vietnamese*, Susan Sheehan has written about systems. In that book, she gave us instead a series of portraits sketched in the midst of a hideous war whose irrationalities and duplicities were dramatized by ten very different lives. Sheehan tried hard to stand back and not "name" in that work; for the most part, her subjects did all the talking, while she converted their words into a provocatively cadenced indirect discourse. Even so the book clearly meant to point the finger at something larger than the characters it described. As a journalist living among the war's tangible horrors, Sheehan wanted to work from the inside out, from the dozens of confusions inadvertently revealed in human speech to the intentional, sometimes pompous certainties of public statement.

In the four books that followed, Sheehan again worked from the inside out, but in them she had systems to write about (and often against): prison, welfare, mental health care, home nursing care. Again there are the representative personalities, vividly (at times, perhaps, excessively) detailed, whose lives tell us much about the systems under which they live. Sheehan spends hundreds, sometimes thousands of hours with her subjects. Occasionally, as in the case of Carmen Santana (the representative welfare mother), she lives with them. Her many interviews involve everyone from case workers to supervisors to guards and fellow inmates and even neighbors. Like a good journalist Sheehan is in the middle of it all, and she gets, as she should, good and dirty. Many of the people with whom she talks are the systems' flacks, the trained spokespeople who are meant to explain the institutions they oversee and in which they function.

Such professionals are not, however, at the center of Sheehan's works. As in *Ten Vietnamese*, the real centers of her books are the "chief participants and chief victims" of socioeconomic systems. Trust their voices, she suggests, and they will inevitably tell a truth. Sheehan operates as something of a *cinéma vérité* director: she lets the camera (in this case the pen) roll and edits later, pruning and rearranging her material. She will, in the process, convert many of her interviewees' words into indirect discourse, a technique that lends itself to summary and economy but also allows for the careful, sometimes inappropriate superimposition of the writer's attitudes and conclusions

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on the less self-conscious words of the speaker.

What can't easily be converted into indirect discourse is the sociohistorical background she provides for each of her texts. We learn of the origins of institutions and systems, of their evolution, of the dates at which they made one kind of change or another. And even this history we learn in detail: we know when a décor is changed, when a passageway is blocked off, when mentally afflicted patients can no longer use the porch after certain hours. Such detail makes these accounts three-dimensional, believable and compelling. In short, Sheehan's writing works by being evocative. And it works not only because she does her sociohistorical homework thoroughly but because she has a novelist's eye and ear for the telling detail that becomes part of a larger revelation.

The simple structural and stylistic facts of *Kate Quinton's Days* are very much in the established Sheehan tradition. There is again the intermingling of personal story and factual research. Kate Quinton is an elderly woman who lives with her daughter Claire in Brooklyn. Claire has a bad back (she has had several spinal fusions) and can no longer minister to her mother's physical problems. They need outside help. They require a system: home nursing care.

The book begins, as do most of Sheehan's works, in an immediately felt personal situation, here with a highly impressionistic passage, *in medias res*:

> February 24, 1982, was a cold day in New York City. Kate Quinton, a pale, thin elderly woman, lay in a bed at Lutheran Medical Center in Brooklyn. The winter-gray afternoon light filtered into her room. Her throat was sore and her feet were swollen. She lay still. She occasionally glanced across the room at her closet (it was marked "A") and at her roommate's closet ("B"). She looked at A and then B, B and then A, as she had been doing for days. Then her eyes focused on the clock in the hall outside her room. It was four o'clock; three minutes past four; five minutes past four.

In the next paragraph we feel a distinct shift of intention and form. We move back from internal drama and into more distanced personal history:

> Mrs. Quinton had been admitted to Lutheran Medical Center on January 5, 1982. She had felt mild abdominal pain for several weeks before that. On New Year's Day, the pain had become more intense; it had been accompanied by nausea and vomiting. On the evening of January 5, Mrs. Quinton was sitting at the dinette table in the apartment she shared with her daughter Claire. She had had no appetite for days and had taken only a few bites of the dinner Claire had prepared.

After all that can be said about research, data and the neutrality of journalism, Susan Sheehan, like so many journalists, is telling a story. This story happens to grow out of direct contact with real people and places, but it is, after all, a story, a rendering in language of a truth that has, we hope, been honestly arrived at. As a rendering its

THE MARBLE QUEEN

Beneath the whorish scent of magnolia
we watch the parade
spill like a river across the avenue before us.

There in the shade I am the child
whistling at the first tide of soldiers,
their boyish hair cropped beneath berets.

There in the shade is mother,
fixed in her common, girlish pose,
her fair legs tucked beneath her.

She pats the blanket beside her,
dusts a fly from her cheek,
then all at once runs her fingers through her hair

until they catch and snap free into the air.
I watch the blue material of her dress
dimple and lift with each gust of wind.

I am happy, I am sad, dazzled
by the wonderland of uniforms that blurs before us.
Which one is me? Which one is not?

I am the child with his magnifying glass
blazing the hearts from insects
then scattering the skeletal ash.

In the gentle dreams of this child
I could match any battalion at war like a giant
and descend from the heavens on my bean stalk

to monitor the sagging world below.
And once I'd grumbled fitfully,
left the armies bewildered like ants
amidst their hills in the ordinary geraniums,
I would ascend my fertile stalk
towards the moonlight of home.

But mother is thinking of something else—
something beyond the river of men
marching into the pastures of violet

and violet-orange haze where they may fall,
something beyond the young son she has brought
to witness their regaling of strength—

as if the parade has caught her conscience,
and in her conscience, a thousand other women.
Some unforgettable picture wells inside her

until she sees it hovering before her
like the bees and mayflies humming
in the blue afternoon—

there so long, so simple,
she has misunderstood it:
the terrible monotonous despair.

And now she sits alone with it,
finds expression for it like a child
dreaming of shadows, waiting

for her mother and father to shake her from it.
And when all the armies have passed,
only their footsteps faint in the immense sunlight,

she tamps the half-moons of her eyelashes,
rises before me like a marble queen
and seizes herself from it.

Henri Cole

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language and structure are important gauges of its objectivity, and that is why they demand close scrutiny. We must watch closely *how* the story is told.

We know how "real" well-used detail can make an issue seem, and how forcefully it can drive home a sociological point. But the choices involved in selecting such detail incline a writer to subjectivity. I remember, for instance, being disturbed by phrases in Sheehan's earlier work. In *A Welfare Mother* she describes the daily activities of her chosen representative subject, Carmen Santana. On such and such a day, "Mrs. Santana gets around to taking Maria to the ophthalmologist, who prescribes glasses for her." Three pages later, "Georgina learns that she is pregnant. She keeps meaning to have an abortion but doesn't get around to it." "Get around to" is a loaded expression. It has, indeed, one of the virtues of indirect discourse: it renders an experience in the terms the subject would be likely to use and so creates a more complete sense of the world under scrutiny. We know, for example, that "get around to" is an expression Mrs. Santana and her peers might use. But it also underscores a certain laziness and reluctance—a lack of initiative and commitment. In this context, it feels far from neutral. This may be some version of "letting the lives of the poor preach the sermon," as Michael Harrington puts it in his introduction, but it finally doesn't register that way. It is at least a slight slur. It is undoubtedly a variety of subjectivity.

Michael Harrington has also written of the "scrupulous objectivity which is [Sheehan's] hallmark," remarking that "her subject matter speaks volumes for itself," and "without a single word of editorializing." But what of her brief summary of some caseworkers' responses to Mrs. Santana? After quoting a caseworker's suggestion that Mrs. Santana use baking soda to clean some of the appliances in her dirty kitchen, Sheehan says:

> If anything distressed caseworkers more than Mrs. Santana's "very sloppy" housekeeping, it was her failure to get her children to school regularly. In this area, too, the baking soda proponents gave Mrs. Santana the benefit of their advice.

The conversion of caseworkers to "baking soda proponents" is a simple and ironic reduction. That anyone styled a baking soda proponent could give advice that would be of "benefit" is doubtful. And isn't it more than stylistically interesting that Sheehan uses different names for a particular subject? Her schizophrenic subject is variously "Miss Frumkin," "Sylvia Frumkin" and "Sylvia." Don't the references sometimes shift in deliberate orchestration with shifting context and rhetoric, insinuating sympathy here or irony there? And what of this statement from another work: "In psychiatry, simple words are never used where complicated ones will do"? Here it is not a question of deciding whether or not Sheehan's opinions are right or wrong so much as admitting that they do indeed exist in a well-crafted, intentionally "neutral" prose account. The details of indirect discourse, from which so much of the power of her narration derives, are also inevitably sources of subjectivity and coloration, something Sheehan's admirers should acknowledge.

The question of subjectivity is raised by another aspect of Sheehan's technique: the exploration of social issues and systems through only one or two characters. There are, again, trade-offs implicit in this strategy. In the representative we have the advantage of immediacy, an engagement not easily achieved on a more populated canvas. We happen to like main characters: we can move along with them at a faster clip because we are more easily taken up by the almost automatic narrative that one person's story can make. In all of Sheehan's books, the use of the representative works well.

If you read Sheehan's books in sequence, from *Ten Vietnamese* (1967) to *A Welfare Mother* (1976), *A Prison and a Prisoner* (1978), *Is There No Place On Earth for Me?* (1982), to the most recent, *Kate Quinton's Days*, you'll find that narrative takes over more and more territory from documentary. The preoccupation with story intensifies. The "facts" become less conspicuously segregated (i.e. less often dramatically alternated with the story) and the contrast between conventional sociology and story is not as stark. Narrative begins to absorb data and we are carried away more by the almost fictional realization of the characters than by the facts and figures that accompany them. The first lines of *Kate Quinton's Days* demonstrate the conversion of facts into a highly literary narrative. The book's last lines suggest a preoccupation with closure not so much of rhetorical argument as of story:

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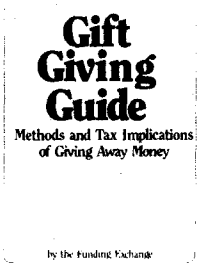

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February 24, 1983, was a cold day in New York City. Kate Quinton, a pale, thin elderly woman, sat in a wheelchair in her apartment in Brooklyn. While she and Jasmine Pagano, whom she had come to regard as highly as Mrs. Lawson had once regarded her, watched *Another World*, a few rays of sun illuminated the living room. By the time *Fantasy* was over, the sky had clouded and darkened. Snow had been predicted for the following day. Mrs. Quinton had never liked snow. At five o'clock, Kate Quinton sat in her kitchen sipping sherry and ginger ale. She listened to the ticktock of the grandfather clock she had first heard as a child in the kitchen of the house in Kirkintilloch. Time was passing as agreeably as she could expect. She looked forward to walking in the spring.

Such is the symmetry and poetry of narrative, and from such symmetry comes the impact of Sheehan's journalistic statement. □

FILMS.

ANDREW KOPKIND

Body Double
The Times of Harvey Milk

In my reverie I am working on a script for Brian De Palma's next movie, called Overkill. *It may be considered a third remake of* Scarface *or a sixth update of* Vertigo, *and it will contain frontal nudity, telekinetic torture and organ-transplant surgery from the point of view of the donor. The plot concerns a young Vietnamese boat person who rises to the top of a Beverly Hills crime triad by dressing as a female gorilla and killing teen-age girls in the shower with a dentist's drill mounted on his privates. I am planning to borrow some bits from Hitchcock. There are certain loose ends, but the fade-out is already set: De Palma's own hands reach through the screen to strangle preselected adherents of Women Against Pornography at every performance. Brian and I hope for a Christmas release.*

Brian De Palma stands, or rather lies, in the great tradition of self-destructive filmmakers who cannot help but kill the thing they love: their movies. With animal abandon, he tears into the sets and sensibility of the genre at hand, drawing blood and provoking anger. The animal of choice is the hedgehog rather than the fox, the beast with a built-in shotgun over the one with a single cunning bite. De Palma comes at his movies fully loaded, with plots of exquisite Gothic tracery, characters of tortured sexuality, scenes washed by blood-dimm'd tides and a technique of dazzling complexity. His tracking shots seem endless, his dollies are in perpetual motion and, overall, his films are filled with visual set pieces that look choreographed rather than merely directed. The long, excruciatingly silent opening of *Dressed to Kill*, the prom night in *Carrie* and the cocaine Armageddon in *Scarface* (all shot M.O.S., without synchronized dialogue) make mute operas and raucous ballets. De Palma's camera tricks and plot turns inevitably recall Hitchcock; but that style is an *hommage* to the master, not an obeisance. In mood, texture and expression, De Palma and Hitchcock are poles apart. The one is flamboyant, excessive, radical in spirit and exposed in flesh. The other is conservative, subdued and economical. De Palma's nose is broad and Italian; Hitchcock's hand is fine and English.

Few of De Palma's progeny survive their maker's assaults, but *Body Double* somehow withstands his film abuse and comes out a witty, chilly, campy and surprisingly intelligent entertainment. Its success is due, first of all, to De Palma's clearly ironic intent: it is a movie about Hollywood, about filmmaking, about the *culture* of sex and violence, rather than about the awful events of the plot. I grant that much of the audience will miss the irony and have a jolly time with the sleaze itself. There is enough murder, mayhem, sadism, pornography, vampirism and female masturbation for every taste. But no one gets off scot-free, for at every turn the movie pokes fun at the moviegoer for his or her lustful fantasies and shocked sensibilities. "I like to watch," Jake, the hero (Craig Wasson), says on several occasions. The reference, of course, is to Chauncey Gardner's peculiar passion in *Being There*. But he's also speaking for us.

"Body double" is filmmakers' jargon for a certain kind of stand-in, the kind De Palma used for Angie Dickinson's nude shots in *Dressed to Kill*. (It was the little promotional controversy surrounding that substitution that gave him the idea for his latest project.) So

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we begin with a Hollywood in-joke from the first title. Actually, *before* the titles: the movie opens with a scene from a low-budget vampire film-within-a-film being shot in a studio. Jake is the ingénue Dracula, a cub actor trying to break into horrible Hollywood, but his career is threatened by a curious claustrophobia (cf. *Vertigo*) that inhibits his ability to *act*. He's good at watching, however, and when a sexually ambiguous chance acquaintance (cf. *Strangers on a Train*) sets him up with a sublet high in the Hollywood Hills, he finds neurotic release peeping at autoerotic hootchy-kootchy in a neighbor's bedroom below (cf. *Rear Window*). His obsession (cf. *Obsession* and *Ossessione*) gets him in trouble when he witnesses a murder (op. cit. all of the above) performed on a hot, rich woman in white by an Indian, as you've probably heard by now, with an electric drill placed where his penis should be. (This is new, as far as I can tell, in the Hitchcock canon, although a Freudian analyst might find a bawdy pun on the master's name in the material of the scene.)

The chase that follows leads Jake into the world of late-night cable porn, and onto the set of a dirty movie, where he co-stars with the enticing punk slut Holly Body (Melanie Griffith, the daughter of Tippi Hedren, cf. *The Birds*). There are two more—no, three more—movies-within-a-movie before *Body Double* ends, with a slight cop-out which makes you wonder whether everything that has gone before might be nothing more than the old actor's nightmare.

De Palma has crafted some masterful scenes that will have filmgoers, film students and filmmakers gasping for weeks to come. I'll mention two. The pas de deux on a multilevel cliffside motel as Jake pursues the elusive object of his desire is at once classical and pop, a sort of *Einstein on the Beach Party Bingo*. And the embrace of the couple at the mouth of a tunnel beneath the cliff is a breathtaking example of how hot is the sex that burns but does not consume.

A last, political note. There's a lot to be said for the view that *Body Double* is sadistic, sexist, misogynist trash that should be scorned as a cultural artifact and perhaps banned under one of the new antipornography statutes as a violation of women's civil rights. Certainly the bits and pieces of the movie, taken separately, look like grounds for indictment. But as a whole, it has a different meaning, and the elements appear not as gratuitous insults but as harsh (and often humorous) comments on itself. This film does not come out of a healthy society. But the way to attack the social context is not to censor the contents. As Brian De Palma knows better than most, repression—of anger, despair, passion and sexuality—is the trouble to begin with, and more repression can only make matters worse.

Repression is a personal problem that is also a public issue. Harvey Milk, the San Francisco city supervisor who was assassinated along with Mayor George Moscone in 1978, lived and worked in that hot and dangerous zone where the personal and the public intersect. Consciously gay at 14, Milk spent his adolescence and young adulthood in the usual social and institutional closets: a Long Island Jewish middle-class family, college, the Navy, a Wall Street job. Then, like countless other homosexuals of his generation, he began a long escape from repression into the counterculture of the 1960s. Long hair, protest politics, pot and a loose life style were easy exits. The route opened wider with immigration to the new gay ghettos on both coasts: Greenwich Village, West Hollywood, San Francisco's Castro Street. The hair and the flight were implicitly political, but Harvey Milk went further and developed an explicitly homosexual politics. He made the personal issue of gay legitimacy the basis of his public campaigns. He ran for office (and lost several times before winning the supervisory seat). He joined his strong base in the Castro with allies across the ethnic and ideological rainbow of San Francisco politics. And he pleaded—rather, in his warm and supportive way, he demanded—that gays come out and announce their sexual identity for the safety of the entire community.

Milk spoke to and for his homosexual supporters, but believed he was working for a greater good: the liberation of the surrounding society. Repressive forces damage gay men and lesbians, but they also deform the hearts and derange the minds of the sexual majority, such as it is. Some monstrous majoritarian morality found a perfect victim in Dan White,

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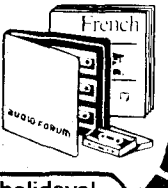

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a young San Francisco fireman who rode the same populist wave as Harvey Milk and was elected to the Board of Supervisors at the same time. The two played out grand and historic themes on a tiny stage. White proposed a series of softball games between teams representing the supervisory districts, so that "the old-fashioned values that built this country" could be tested on the foggy playing fields by the bay. Milk pushed for, and won, an antidiscrimination ordinance protecting sexual minorities. White's was the only vote against it. Milk was a leader of the successful campaign to defeat the Briggs Amendment (Proposition 6), that masterpiece of the repressive genre which would have barred avowed gays and pro-gay heterosexuals from teaching in public schools.

At last the public clash of political positions between the rivals was resolved in one intensely personal moment. Dan White had resigned as a supervisor a few days earlier and was about to be rebuffed by Moscone and Milk in his characteristically erratic bid for reappointment. He crawled into City Hall through a basement window, shot and killed the Mayor, and did the same to Harvey Milk.

Robert Epstein and Richard Schmiechen have made a beautiful and powerful documentary around these urgent events. It is instructive, uplifting, sad and enraging. Friends and political associates of Harvey Milk cry on camera, and it's hard to believe that their tears are not mirrored in the eyes of many in the audience. When Dan White is given a light sentence on a lesser charge by a jury impressed with his defense that a feast of Twinkies fired him up for murder, we must share the anger of the crowd that rioted in response. *The Times of Harvey Milk* brings those emotions to life, which makes it not only extraordinary filmmaking but important historical documentation.

The homosexual culture is unique in many ways, not least of all in its lack of living history. All oppressed groups are invisible to a certain extent, for some period of time. Their strategies to gain equality and win a share of power are in large measure campaigns for visibility. Thus, we have recently seen blacks, women, Hispanics, Native Americans, the aged and the infirm (and other "minorities") turn up in the movies, on television, in books and magazines, in special-studies programs at universities, and in artworks. But there is pathetically little from and about gay culture in the straight mainstream. Hollywood has produced a few "problem" movies (*Making Love*, *Cruising*) which explain to wondering audiences what to do when one's husband goes off with another man, or how to avoid trouble in the leather-and-chains scene. Several psychological and sociological works have been published which look at gay life from about the same distance as the Leakeys watched the fossil families of Australopithecines in Olduvai Gorge.

But living gay history is in exceedingly short supply. Without it, gay people can hardly get a sense of themselves; history is identity. And without it, nobody of any persuasion can begin to understand the dynamic of sexual revolution. We are told, quite rightly, that American history minus blacks or women or Jews is dangerously imperfect. Cultural and social history without homosexuals is just as wrong. *The Times of Harvey Milk* joins the short list of filmic and literary documents about the daily experience and political struggle of gay people in the modern age. (Others in the group include Epstein's previous film, *Word is Out*, and a public television documentary scheduled for broadcast next year, *Before Stonewall*, with which I have had some tangential advisory connection.) This is not only filmmaking; it enters the realm of life where personal and public issues inform history and make art. □

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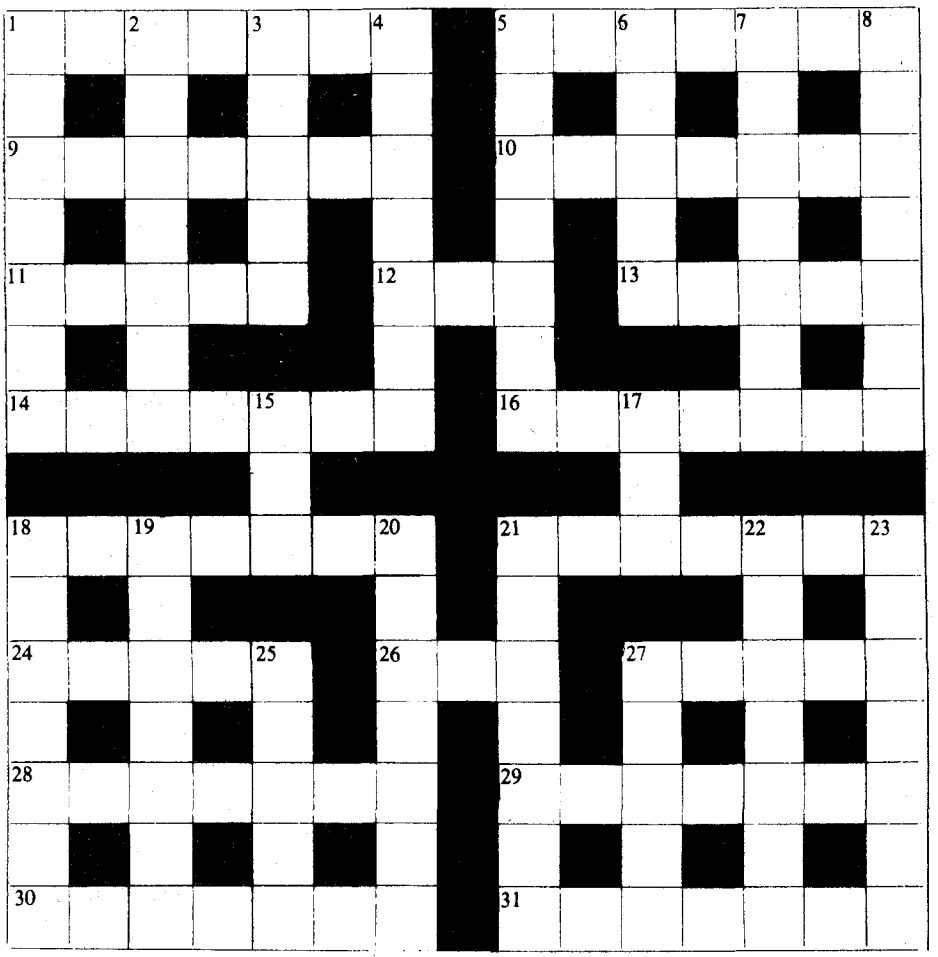
T	R	O	U	N	C	E	■	H	A	I	R	N	E	T
T	■	N	■	E	■	H	■	A	■	D	■	T	■	U
E	N	G	O	R	G	E	■	V	I	L	L	A	I	N
R	■	E	■	V	■	A	■	I	■	O	■	G	■	D
■	■	S	T	E	E	R	I	N	G	W	H	E	E	L
A	■	■	■	■	■	T	■	G	■	■	■	■	■	Y
D	I	S	E	M	B	O	D	I	M	E	N	T	■	■
U	■	O	■	E	■	F	■	T	■	X	■	H	■	A
L	A	M	B	E	N	T	■	I	S	C	H	I	U	M
A	■	E	■	T	■	H	■	N	■	L	■	S	■	O
T	W	O	T	I	M	E	■	F	L	A	T	T	E	R
E	■	N	■	N	■	■	■	O	■	I	■	L	■	A
D	R	E	D	G	E	■	C	R	O	M	W	E	L	L

Crossword Puzzle No. 2032

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 One doesn't like to hear it within the family—and especially in the automobile. (7)
5 Hopeful actors knew of such a circuit—might be made up of beats you hear. (7)
9 Our country must be backward to lay out money, hang it! (7)
10 An English pantechnicon comes back with the rear smashed from some place in France and Spain. (7)
11 A pleading not to die because of the fruit. (5)
12 and 14 Sirs, if small, you won't go out on them Saturday and Sunday! (4, 6)
13 Does what Elvis did with common diamonds. (5)
14 See 12
16 If you're planning on starting something, this is the place for it! (7)
18 Rubbed against something rough? What's the point in it, it's admitted! (7)
21 Alias Davidson? (7)
24 When a treaty was called this of 25, it contributed to WW I. (It could be considered only a small fight!) (5)
26 If you know Trig, you might be acquainted with it shortly as an island. (3)
27 One might scatter 16 without a place to sleep. (5)
28 Make dim by comparison, as the clip seems to show. (7)
29 Indian Ocean island for returning classmates. (7)
30 Obtained cues, when mistakenly put on the politically radical. (7)
31 When returned, the weapon obtains what might be gold. (7)

DOWN

1 The animal has a bird around it, but the ecclesiastic might be surrounded by it. (7)
2 His magpie was a little bit of a robber! (7)
3 She's in the fire next—no wonder she suggests peace! (5)
4 Pidgin for warehouses—obviously from the beginning of a fetching request. (7)
5 Places such as Hitler found at last to be no fun for one on course. (7)
6 Does one flow or split? (5)
7 Something's eaten off it. (It might be smoked.) (7)
8 When something like apple pie comes up it might be well prepared on top. (7)
15 and 17 Some sleep in them, but they're obviously building extensions without air conditioning. (6)
18 Do they talk too much about something like oil wells? (7)
19 With a shedding of tears, starts to lick a kind of paint. (7)
20 It takes one short month to have the grass as ordered. (7)
21 Show the precedent for any such! (4-3)
22 A term of contempt for what those going underground have to live? (3-4)
23 Perhaps some horses found around in those associated with the halls of Montezuma. (7)
25 See 24 across
27 What those in such as Abscam were supposed to get. (5)

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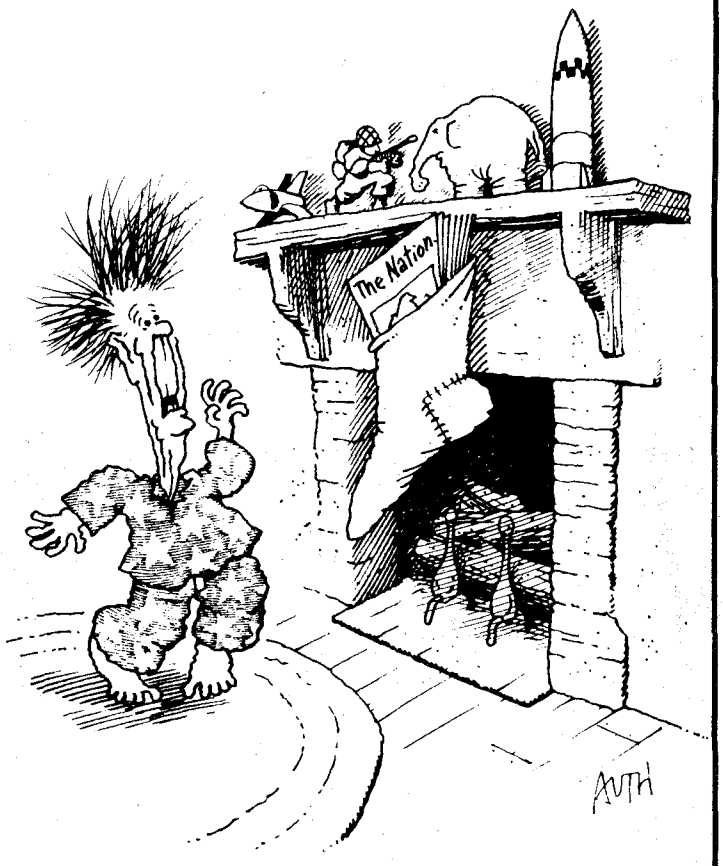

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